EC approves 50m ECU grant for Jordan

BRUSSELS (R) — The European Commission said on Friday it had approved a 50 million ECU ($68 million) grant to help Jordan's economic reforms. It said in a statement the money would be used in two equal tranches to help finance the country's balance of payments gap this year and next. Counterpart funds would be used to support employment programmes in the areas of water, roadworks, education and health. The commission said the money was dependent on Jordan continuing active reform under the International Monetary Fund and World Bank programme to help develop a more market-oriented economy. The commission separately announced grants totalling 8.5 million ECUs ($11.6 million) on three separate Mediterranean aid projects of regional interest. The projects include experimental urban development cooperation between community and non-EC Mediterranean cities, help to set up an Arab language service for the Euronews television satellite network, and agricultural training.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation

جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية، الرأي،

Iraq lost $35 billion oil revenues

NICOSIA (R) — Lost oil revenues and damage to oil installations have cost Iraq $35 billion since the Gulf crisis began in 1990, a report issued by Iraqi dissidents on Friday said. The report, made available to Reuters in Nicosia by the London-based "Iraqi consultative commission," a group of dissident experts and politicians, outlined the effects of U.N. sanctions and Gulf war damage. It said damage to oil installations during the Gulf war, estimated at $5 billion to $10 billion, included pumping stations, pipelines, refineries, a petrochemical plant, export facilities and four to five oil tankers. The report said a U.N. ban on oil exports had deprived Iraq of its traditional customers and limited its chances of redeveloping its oil industry. It said Iraq would have to deduct $34 billion to $67 billion from any future oil revenues until the year 2000 to pay war reparations demanded by the U.N. Security Council. Iraq also needed $100 billion to rebuild its infrastructure and $42.1 billion to service its $100 billion debt, it said.

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U.S., allies plan ultimatum to Iraq

Military strike a strong 'option'

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The United States, Britain and France have agreed to press for a quick public ultimatum demanding that Iraq comply with Gulf war ceasefire agreements or face allied military attack, Bush administration officials said on Friday.

The officials, who asked not to be identified, confirmed a Washington Post newspaper report that the warning could come as early as this weekend if Iraq does not agree to let U.N. inspectors enter a Baghdad building suspected of containing documents on Iraq's arms programme.

The officials said other countries might join the warning, which would lead to bombing and Cruise missile attacks on military targets if Iraq did not comply.

The Washington Post, quoting senior administration officials, said the warning could be issued in the name of the U.N. Secretary General or the Security Council and would give Iraq only a matter of days to respond.

The officials refused to give any detailed plans, but one suggested that a military attack could involve repeated bombing of Iraqi military targets until the Baghdad government allows U.N. inspectors into the agriculture ministry building.

They said that such an attack would probably involve at least U.S., British and French aircraft and missiles after giving Baghdad warning that it had only days to comply.

A team of U.N. inspectors left Iraq on Friday after a long standoff with Baghdad officials, who refused to let them enter the building on grounds such a move would violate Iraqi sovereignty.

"The ceasefire agreements (which ended the Gulf war last year) were drawn up to give free movement to U.N. inspectors to seek out the extent of Iraq's programme on weapons of mass destruction," said one administration official.

"If Iraq stops complying with the agreements, then the ceasefire would be suspended," the official said.

The U.S. Defence Department said on Thursday that Mediterranean port calls had been cancelled for the U.S. aircraft carrier Saratoga, two cruisers and a destroyer and noted that the carrier Independence was already in the Gulf south of Iraq.

U.S. surface warships and submarines in the region are also capable of firing accurate, long-range Tomahawk cruise missiles at targets in Iraq with little fear of retaliation.

Among U.S. air force warplanes based around the area, including in Saudi Arabia and Turkey, are radar-avoiding F-117A Stealth fighters capable of delivering laser-guided bombs with pinpoint accuracy.

White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said this week that Iraq had repeatedly dragged its feet on cooperating with U.N. arms inspections and that, this time, the United States was not ruling out any option, including military force.

Rolf Ekeus, chief of the U.N. commission overseeing elimination of Iraqi arsenal, met with Iraq's U.N. ambassador, Abdul Amir Al Anbari.

Mr. Ekeus suggested that U.N. weapons inspectors enter the ministry in small groups, not en masse, the president of the U.N. Security Council, Jose Luis Kesus of Cape Verde, siaid Thursday. Commission sources said the groups would determine what is inside and whether a full inspection team should go in.

Mr. Ekeus has said inspectors believe the ministry contains documents and material on Iraq's ballistic, chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programme.

Mr. Anbari was offering a variation of Iraq's offer earlier this week to let experts from neutral, non-aligned members of the Security Council search the ministry as long as they wre not part of a U.N. team. The council rejected that proposal and details of the amended plan were unavailable.

Mr. Ekeus and Mr. Anbari refused to discuss the substance of their talks.

Mr. Ekeus was expected to brief council members. Mr. Anbari was expected to consult with his government before negotiations resume, possibly Friday.

U.S Secretary of State James Baker ended a six-day Middle East tour in Saudi Arabia on Friday leaving a strong impression that a new military strike against Iraq was imminent.

But he did not get public endorsement from his Gulf war Arab allies for U.S. sabre-rattling.

"The United States is prepared to do whatever is necessary to enforce Security Council resolutions," Mr. Baker told reporters in response to questions about the possible use of force.

He said President Bush had "made clear he has not ruled out military action as an option."

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince

(Continued on page 5)



His Majesty King Hussein with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad during a visit the King paid to Syria Friday (Petra wirephoto)

King pays brief visit to Syria

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Friday paid a brief visit to Syria and offered condolences to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad over the death of his mother.

King Hussein and President Assad also held a meeting which was attended by Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam, followed by another closed meeting which dwelt on bilateral relations, the Jordan News Agency, Petra reported.

King Hussein was accompanied on the visit by Royal Court Chief Khaled Al Karaki.

King Hussein had talks with Mr. Assad in Damascus on July 16, prior to a Middle East tour by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker to try and revive Middle East peace talks.

Damascus meeting finds Rabin proposals not enough — Sharaa

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa said on Friday that Israel's latest Middle East peace proposals did not go far enough for the Arabs.

Speaking after a meeting of Arab parties to the U.S.-brokered peace talks, Mr. Sharaa said they found Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's proposals to date vague and ambiguous.

"We discussed the policy of the new Israeli government. We found that this policy was ambiguous," he told reporters.

"According to the statements made until now (by Mr. Rabin), this policy does not provide the minimum level required to push forward the peace process."

Foreign ministers of Jordan and Lebanon and the head of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's foreign affairs department, Farouq Kaddoumi, attended the talks along with Palestinian peace negotiators.

The foreign minister of Egypt also attended.

The meeting opened with a challenge to the new Israeli government when members of the Palestinian peace negotiaing team sat behind Mr. Kaddoumi.

An Israeli police spokeswoman said the members, violating a ban on contacts with the PLO adopted by the outgoing government of Yitzhak Shamir, could be questioned. But she said an order first had to come from the Rabin government.

Delegation member Faisal Al Husseini told Reuters at the end of the first session: "We were sitting under the flag of Palestine and there should be no rejection of such a meeting."

Mr. Sharaa, briefed reporters after the first session, said the meeting discussed Mr. Rabin's proposals for limiting Jewish settlement in the occupied territories.

The ministers "called for a total halt of all settlements. We do not differentiate between political or security settlement," he said.

Mr. Rabin, elected on a pledge to accelerate the peace process, has offered to halt what he calls political settlements but says settlement needed to ensure Israel's "security" should continue.

Mr. Sharaa said the Damascus meeting reiterated that any agreement to end the 45-year-old Arab-Israeli conflict should be comprehensive.

It should be based on U.N. resolutions 242, 338 and 425 requiring Israeli withdrawal from the occupied lands, he added.

Mr. Sharaa said the ministers discussed a date and venue for the next round of the Arab-Israeli peace talks adding that they would come to a decision later.

Chief Palestinian peace delegate Haidar Abdul Shafi told Reuters on Thursday the meeting was discussing a proposal by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker to hold the next round of talks in Washington next month. He said the idea was likely to be approved.

Mr. Baker on Friday wrapped up a Middle East tour during which he discussed ways of injecting new life into the peace process.

Mr. Abdul Shafi told reporters before the meeting began that he rejected Mr. Rabin's proposal.

"What Rabin has proposed is unacceptable," Mr. Abdul Shafi said. "We have always sought Arab unity and Arab interests will only be safeguarded by closing our ranks."

Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber of Jordan described the first round of talks as extremely good, saying that the three-hour session offered a chance to exchange ideas clearly and objectively on all issues of common interest. He said that views were identical to a great extent on

(Continued on page 5)

Nominations begin for Aug. 18 bye-elections

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Muslim Brotherhood Friday announced its candidates for the Aug. 18 bye-elections in the Fourth and Sixth districts of Amman.

The announcement came as a three-day nomination period began Friday. Earlier this week it was not clear if the Brotherhood would field a candidate for the Fourth District where a seat was vacated by the death of Deputy Naef Al Hadid last month.

The Brotherhood has chosen Dr. Hani Al Tahrawi, lawyer and former head of Sahab Municipality as its candidate. Dr. Tahrawi has both close tribal and regional links, said Ziad Abu Ghanimeh, a spokesman for the Brotherhood.

The Brotherhood's candidate in the Sixth District (Madaba) Mohammad Khreibat, belongs to the Azaideh tribe, just as the late Deputy Ahmed Qteish Al Azaideh.

Political analysts suggested that by choosing Dr. Tahrawi the Brotherhood "is killing two birds with one stone." Like many Brotherhood representatives from Madaba and Irbid, both Dr. Tahrawi and Mr. Khreibat belong to large and prominent families.

Dr. Tahrawi joins five other candidates already in the race. Three of the candidates are from the Al Hadid clan, Deifallah, Arwar, and Minweir, while two others, Mohammad Al Shobaki and Salman Dabubi, are members of established families in the Fourth District.

The Brotherhood currently has 21 deputies in the Lower House of Parliament but hopes to increase its number in the 1993 legislative elections.

During the 1989 elections 15 out of the 22 deputies elected came from urban centres, such as Amman, Zarka and Irbid. Observers of the Brotherhood say that by linking up with prominent tribalists the Brotherhood could make gains in the heartland of tribal and traditional pro-establishment politics.

"The south, the rural and tribal areas are still open pastures for political parties of all kinds, and it will be there where the new political organisations will test their strength to influence the electorate," said the political observer.

But it will also be in the urban centres and the seven districts of Amman that the Brotherhood will have to prove that despite its mixed record in the Lower House since the 1989 elections, it can still hold on to its electorate.

It will become clear later this week how many of the 35,000 in each district will register and take advantage of their voting rights. In 1989, over 80 per cent of the Jordanians who were registered voted, but only some 45 per cent of the eligible voters had reg-

(Continued on page 5)

Senate approves law on parties with minor changes

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — One week after the government promised to lobby against an Upper House (Senate) proposal to ban teachers from membership in political parties, the Senate has endorsed the law as it was proposed by the Lower House without any major amendments.

A conflict appeared to be brewing last week over a proposal by 20 senators to introduce an amendment to the law which would keep teachers and employees of the Ministry of Education excluded from political activity in the country. The government immediately retorted by labelling the proposal as "undemocratic" and an attempt to delay the lifting of a 36-year ban on political pluralism in the country.

"The proposal was debated in the Law Committee of the Senate and we briefed them on our point of view and they were satisfied with this," a senior government official told the Jordan Times Friday.

However, an amendment was introduced stressing the need to maintain the neutrality of the educational institutions and not using them as "installations" for political activity.

This "compromise" was reached after the Law Committee held three consecutive meetings to discuss the proposal with government officials. Present at the meetings were Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education Thougan Hindawi, Minister of the Interior Jawdat Sboul, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Atef Btoush and a number of senators and deputies.

The 20 senators who proposed the ban on teachers feared that teachers' involvement in political activity would "detract from the educational purpose of schools and would cause cracks and political party grouping at all levels beginning from classrooms up to and including the ministry itself."

The government, however, argued that the teachers were also members of the Jordanian society and as such have their own particular set of grievances which need addressing within the framework of political parties.

Another amendment introduced by the senators was adding "within the law" to Article 18 item A which stipulates "a political party's offices, documents, correspondence, means of communication are immune to surveillance, forceful inspection or confiscation."

This amendment was introduced by the "lawyers" among the senators who wanted it to "tighten loose ends" although its meaning was implicit throughout the law.

"Even without the amendment the government would require a legal order before it can inspect any political party's headquarters," a senator, who asked he remain anonymous, said. "But some senators felt it was necessary to make the addition just so the article would not be seen as an absolute freedom for the party."

According to the senator the only absolute freedom guaranteed by the Jordanian Constitution is protection of the citizen from expulsion from his country. "Any other freedom is controlled by law.

"The legally-minded among the senators feared that protection of political party's offices, documents, correspondence and means of communication would also become absolute," the senator said.

The Lower House will now debate the amendments proposed by the Senate before the law is finalised and is put into effect. For spediency, the Lower House is expected to hold an open debate of the amendments rather than refer them to the Law Committee for further scrutiny.

Baker ends shuttle on an upbeat note

JEDDAH (Agencies) — U.S. Secretary of State James Baker ended his Middle East peace tour on Friday saying he hoped peace talks would now resume quickly and the Arabs would take up a proposal to continue them in permanent session.

Mr. Baker said before leaving Saudi Arabia after the six-country tour he hoped the Israelis and Arabs would come together quickly and pick up the proposal by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to continue without breaks until solutions were reached.

Mr. Baker told an airport news conference he hoped the different sides would get down to "nitty-gritty issues" of practical peace-making when talks resumed.

He said both Washington and the Arabs believed Mr. Rabin's advent to power in Israel was an opportunity to revive and speed up the peace process.

"We have seen (Arab) statements welcoming this change ... it presents new opportunities for moving the peace process," Mr. Baker said.

His host, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Feisal, also told the news conference there was new hope for progress in the stalled Arab-Israeli peace negotiations.

"We are very encouraged," he said after Mr. Baker briefed Saudi King Fahd on his talks with Mr. Rabin and with the leaders of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the Palestinians.

"There is indeed an opportunity now to generate momentum in the peace process, that the parties get together and actually do nitty-gritty negotiations instead of just meeting and talking," Mr. Baker said to reporters before taking off for Manila.

"I hope very much that the parties will come together again very quickly and that the Arab countries will pick up on Mr. Rabin's suggestion that the negotiations be continuous," he said.

Mr. Baker said the Arabs agreed with Washington that Mr. Rabin's new policy on Jewish settlements opened the way "for pushing the peace process forward in a positive way."

"Israel's new policy is moving away from building settlements in the occupied territories. It's an indication that there will be severe and significant reduction in the settlement activity, which we welcome," Mr. Baker said.

Mr. Baker described the Saudi support for the U.S. initiative for an Arab-Israeli settlement as an "extraordinary and important role."

"In my opinion, the peace process would not have been possible without the help of King Fahd and Saudi Arabia," said Mr. Baker. "Without this help we would not have been able to put the process together."

Mr. Baker left for Manila to attend the foreign ministers meeting of the Association of South-East Asian Nations before a scheduled flight home Sunday.

Early Thursday, Mr. Baker made an unannounced drive into Lebanon in an armoured limousine as part of an armed motorcade. It was the first visit to the country by a U.S. secretary of state in nine years.

His meeting with President Elias Hrawi and Foreign Minister Faris Bouez followed declarations by the Lebanese government that it intended to take charge of its own affairs.

"We strongly support the political independence, the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Lebanon," Mr. Baker said at a joint news conference with Mr. Hrawi in Zahle. "We hope that our presence here makes a statement in support of that independence and that sovereignty."

Mr. Hrawi said Lebanon has lived "a painful 16 years" and that Mr. Baker's presence permits him to witness Lebanon's "way out from the misery of war."

An aide said Mr. Baker agreed to make the three-hour trip despite the still-tense security situation because he wanted to acknowledge "a pattern of behaviour where they were unifying central institutions and extending military authority."

Leoanese officials had pressed

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Israel sees 'no reason' to shift talks

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel sees no reason to move the next round of Arab-Israeli peace talks from Rome to Washington, a political source said Friday.

The source, who declined to be identified, was reacting to statements by Palestinians that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker had suggested the move during a meeting Monday with Palestinians in occupied Jerusalem.

After meeting with Palestinians and Israelis, Mr. Baker went on to Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia to confer with Arab leaders on the peace talks.

On Friday, Dennis Ross, head of the State Department's policy planning staff, met with Prime Ministe Yitzhak Rabin to brief him on Mr. Baker's talks with the Arabs, Israel Radio said.

The discussion focussed mainly on Mr. Baker's talks in Syria and on the decision of Rabin government to halt construction of some 6,000 housing units in the occupied territories, the report said.

Tayseer Arouri, an adviser to the Palestinian delegation, said Thursday that Mr. Baker suggested the next round of talks take place in Washington after Italian officials said Italy would not be ready to host the talks by early August, when Palestinians hope to resume negotiations.

The Israeli source said he was unaware of a proposal to hold a meeting other than in Rome or of any problems in convening in the Italian capital. "In any case we see no reason why the talks would be moved from Rome," the source was quoted as saying by the AP.

'Secret Syria-Israel contact'

An Israeli newspaper said on Friday Russia's ambassador in Damascus had secretly travelled overland to Israel to pass on Syria's view on Middle East peace efforts.

The daily Haaretz said Ambas-

(Continued on page 5)

Lebanon to hold polls in August, September

BEIRUT (Agencies) — President Elias Hrawi's government on Friday called three-stage general elections for August and September in line with political reforms following Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war.

A government statement said voting will be held Aug. 23 in the eastern Bekaa Valley and the northern province, Aug. 30 in Beirut and the Christian and Druze hinterland surrounding the capital, and Sept. 6 in south Lebanon.

The decision was taken despite opposition by right-wing Christians who fear the new parliament would be controlled by Syria and would weaken their traditional hold on power in Lebanon.

Under and Arab league-brokered peace pact that ended the civil war, the country elect a new 128-seat house, divided equally between Muslims and Christians.

The present parliament was elected in 1972 for a four-year term. The civil war prevented general elections and the unicameral house has repeatedly renewed its term.

Information Minister Michel Samaha announced the dates after a two-hour meeting of the cabinet. The session was boycotted by most Christian ministers.

The Christian Lebanese Forces (LF) and some other Christian parties including supporters of exiled Rebel General Michel Aoun want elections postponed until after a Syrian troop pullback.

The opponents argue that elections while Syrian forces are in Beirut and other areas will ensure the success of candidates loyal to Damascus, which has a major role in Lebanon's political, military and foreign policies under a treaty of cooperation.

Syria has an estimated 40,000 troops in two-thirds of Lebanon.

The cabinet said that Lebanese troops and police would provide security for the polls and ensure total freedom for voters.

It said it would announce special dates for voters in areas of South Lebanon under Israeli control but said the polls would be held under the supervision of U.N. peacekeepers there.

Most Christian areas observed a general strike on Thursday to protest against plans to hold elections before a Syrian pullback.

The LF, the strongest militia in Lebanon until private armies were disbanded last year, spearheads the opposition to the polls.

Security sources and diplomats fear the Christian campaign against elections will lead to a new cycle of violence as Mr. Hrawi's government is determined that the elections should go ahead.

Christian opposition to presidential elections in 1988 led to a power struggle and sparked fighting that killed some 3,000 before the civil war's end in 1990.

Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam warned Christian opponents last week that Syrian troops might remain in Beirut and other areas after September if the elections were foiled.

U.S. Secretary of State James

(Continued on page 5)

Israeli jets raid Hizbollah positions

NABATIYEH, Lebanon (Agencies) — Israeli warplanes blasted bases of resistance fighters in South Lebanon on Friday in the second such attack in 24 hours, security sources said.

They said two Israeli fighter jets made two bombing runs and fired six rockets on Hizbollah positions in the Iqlim Al Toufah district while another provided protection.

The Iqlim Al Toufah mountain ridge, about 40 kilometres south of Beirut, is a strategic area that links resistance territory with an Israeli-held strip in South Lebanon that runs to the Israeli borders.

An Israeli army spokeswoman confirmed the second Israeli air attack in two days, saying:

"Israeli air force planes before noon again attacked posts of the Hizbollah organisation in Jabil Safi in Lebanon. The posts were hit and all our planes returned safely to base."

Hizbollah has been using the hills as a jumping ground to attack Israeli troops and their South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia allies who patrol the 15-kilometre deep self-styled Israeli "security zone."

Witnesses saw palls of black smoke rising over hills in 'Ain Bouswar and Jabil Safi but journalists were not allowed to approach the site. There was no immediate word on casualties.

Dr. Ghassan Ihsan Edilby

D.D.S., M. Sc. (London)
Formerly consultant & head of Oral Surgery
Department at the Royal Medical Services
Visiting advisor to the Oral Surgery and Dentistry Unit at
Pharoen Hospital in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Now opened His Own Clinic

Jabal Amman, Third Circle, Rawhi Medical Centre
opposite Khalidi Hospital
Clinic tel.: 658000 - Home 663063

Demirel gives warning on water to neighbours

SANLIURFA, Turkey (R) — Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel told Syria and Iraq on Friday they could not lay claim to Turkey's rivers any more than Ankara could claim their oil.

"This is a matter of sovereignty. This is our land. We have the right to do anything we like," he told a news conference.

"The water resources are Turkey's. The oil resources are theirs. We do not say we share their oil resources. They cannot say they share our water resources," he said in Istanbul.

Mr. Demirel's remarks are certain to irritate Turkey's downstream neighbours Syria and Iraq, which both use the Euphrates and Tigris for power and irrigation.

Mr. Demirel was speaking on the eve of a lavish party Turkey is throwing to start turbines at the Ataturk Dam on the Euphrates River, key to a $25 billion plan for the troubled southeast.

President Turgut Ozal and Mr. Demirel will host leaders from over a dozen countries at a spectacular ceremony on Saturday at the dam, 62 kilometres northwest of Sanliurfa.

Turkish newspapers say the televised extravaganza at the reservoir, involving displays of water ballet, lasers, fireworks and balloons, is costing more than $3 million.

The turbines are starting a year behind schedule because the dam lake has filled more slowly than first planned.

Turkish officials say this is because Ankara has kept a 1987 promise to keep the Euphrates flowing across the Syrian border at an average of 500 cubic metres a second.

Mr. Demirel gave no indication of any change in Ankara's policy, but said the rivers belonged to Turkey up to its borders.

The two turbines are among eight 300-megawat units at the $2.7 billion dam, which stands 169 metres high and ranks as the ninth biggest rock-filled dam in the world.

Turkey has pinned enormous hopes on the southeast Anatolia project (GAP), which envisage 22 dams and 19 hydroelectric plants on the Euphrates and Tigris by the year 2005.

Successive governments have creamed off scarce investment funds for GAP's ambitious goals to harness Turkey's two greatest rivers, irrigate 1.7 million hectares of land in eight provinces and develop the impoverished southeast.

The project is also touted as an economic answer to Kurdish unrest in a region where more than 4,300 people have been killed since Kurdish guerrillas began a war for independence in 1984.

Critics fear taxpayers may get scant return on their money.

The mainly Arab farmers in the heat-scorched Harran Plain abutting the Syrian border will be the first to benefit from irrigation when water starts flowing though twin 26.4 kilometres tunnels from the Ataturk Dam in 1994.

No land reform is planned in an area where eight per cent of farmers are estimated to own 50 per cent of the land.

Some southeastern provinces most ravaged by Kurdish-related violence fall outside the scope of GAP and many Kurds say only a political solution can end the long-running conflict.

The Ataturk Dam, centrepiece of GAP, will eventually generate 8.9 billion kilowatt-hours of power a year, compared with Turkey's 1991 total production of 60 billion KWH.

It will account for almost a third of the 27.3 billion KWH to be produced by the whole GAP project and its reservoir will irrigate 476,000 hectares of land in the Sanliurfa region and the Harran Plain.

Heavy fighting halts food supplies to Juba

NAIROBI (AP) — Heavy fighting has halted emergency food flights to hundreds of thousands of starving people in southern Sudan's capital of Juba, aid workers said Thursday.

Officials of the Lutheran World Federation and the U.N. World Food Programme, the only agencies which deliver food to the city besieged by rebels, said planes have been unable to land since Sunday.

The city's estimated 235,000 civilians mainly depend on food delivered by the two agencies.

Bob Koepp of the Lutheran federation said his agency flew the last shipment of 230 tonnes last week. The town needs a minimum of 400 tonnes a week, he said.

"The food situation is very bad," Mr. Koepp said.

Dieter Hannusch of the World Food Programme said there were reports a government aircraft landed in Juba on Wednesday, but was unable to unload due to shelling by the rebel Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army (SPLA). The government flies food and material to its troops in the Juba region.

The Lutherans deliver their supplies to civilians from Nairobi and the World Food Programme from Sudan's capital, Khartoum.

The rebels said in a statement Thursday that fighting was raging in Juba's outskirts and that they had destroyed a military detachment attempting a breakout from the city the previous day.

They said the rebels also shot down a helicopter gunship supporting the soldiers.

The report could not be independently verified.

It was the second government helicopter the rebels claimed they shot down with surface-to-air missiles.

The rebels said they shot another helicopter Sunday near its their former headquarters in the town of Torit, 130 kilometres southeast of Juba. Thirty-five troops aboard were killed, the rebels said.

Torit is one of several towns previously held by rebels that the government captured in a major offensive that began early this year.

The rebels took up arms in 1983 to press for increased autonomy for the predominantly Christian and animist south.

The Muslim north traditionally controls the central government in Khartoum.

American voters looking inward; Iraq looms larger

WASHINGTON (AP) — Americans are turning inward during this first election year of the post cold war era, and only rising tensions over Iraq seem capable of diverting voters from their fixation on domestic issues.

The international situation is far more benign now than it was four years ago when European communism was still alive, there was no Middle East peace process, and the United States and the Soviet Union were fighting proxy wars on three continents.

The Democrats captured the national mood last week by barely mentioning Yugoslavia, scene of Europe's first war in four decades, and giving short shrift to such issues as the Middle East, Haiti and China.

President George Bush and Democratic candidate Bill Clinton agree that deeper U.S. political and military involvement in Yugoslavia would be a mistake despite the continuing humanitarian crisis there.

Political analysts point out that the national trend towards introspection is not surprising at a time of mounting economic and social problems at home and no obvious military threat from abroad. The latter situation is a luxury Americans have not enjoyed in a presidential election year since 1936.

All this has prompted a major effort among some Republicans to have Secretary of State James Baker leave the State Department and help out with Mr. Bush's troubled reelection campaign effort. Mr. Bush insists no decision has been made.

Some argue that it is less essential for Mr. Baker to continue on at the State Department now that he has successfully negotiated deep cuts in nuclear weapons with Russian President Boris Yeltsin and helped get the Middle East peace process moving again.

Robert Hunter, an associate at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, says Mr. Baker should stay on at the State Department regardless of whether foreign policy is a secondary issue in this year's election campaign.

"To the extent that there is a chance for moving forward in the Middle East peace process, it would be zero without Baker," says Mr. Hunter.

Diplomacy in the Middle East, he says "is a highly personalised thing. You can't take Baker out and put somebody else in as an interchangeable part."

The Brookings Institution's Helmut Sonnenfeldt said Mr. Baker's "absence would be felt" in the Middle East if he leaves the State Department but that it would not be fatal to the peace process. More important than Mr. Baker to the process, Mr. Sonnenfeldt believes, was the election last month of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin

Both Mr. Hunter and Mr. Sonnenfeldt agree that the generally complacent public mood on foreign affairs could be shaken by the Iraqi issue and the way Mr. Bush handles it.

In response to Iraq's defiance of U.N. efforts to locate and destroy weapons of mass destruction, the Bush administration's rhetoric has become increasingly strident.

"We are not ruling out the use of military force," presidential Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater said Wednesday. Pentagon officials note that 17,000 U.S. military personnel remain in the Gulf region along with 250 American fighter planes.

To Mr. Hunter and other experts, there is no doubt that Mr. Bush will take into account the potential political fallout of any decision to use force again against Iraq.

Mr. Hunter says there is no pressing need to move against Iraq before the election.

"Iraq is a long-term issue," Mr. Hunter says. "Bush can deal with it now or deal with it later."

Mr. Clinton, meanwhile, indicated in a statement Thursday he could support military action against Iraq under certain conditions.

"Let there be no mistake: If the United Nations decides to use force to ensure Iraqi compliance with the ceasefire agreements, I will support American participation in such action," he said.

Turkey voices concern at Cyprus snag

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel on Friday voiced concern at an apparent snag in U.N.-led talks on Cyprus, saying any deadlock would damage Turkey.

"Any breakdown in the Cyprus talks would create grave results for Turkey," Mr. Demirel told an Istanbul news conference. "The possibility worries me."

The talks, which began in June and resumed on July 15 after a three-week break, are aimed at reuniting Cyprus under a bi-communal, bi-zonal federal system.

Britain's U.N. Ambassador Sir David Hannay said in New York on Thursday that U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali had delivered a "rather disturbing report" on progress in the Cyprus talks to the five Security Council permanent members.

The U.N. chief sought to "enlist our support in handling that situation, which as you know is a bit stuck at the moment," Mr. Hannay said. "We will indeed be helping him in that way, I think. We are planning to meet Mr. Denktash tomorrow."

Turkish media said Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash had asked for a one-day postponement of talks due to have taken place on Thursday. They quoted Mr. Denktash as saying he would tell Mr. Ghali he was ready to accept a 1986 U.N. proposal on territorial adjustments on the divided island.

"We have always been in favour of a fair, just and workable solution," Mr. Demirel said, adding that any settlement should meet the expectations of Turkish and Greek Cypriots.

"Any hasty solution forcefully imposed on the two sides would have little chance of survival," he said.

"We have always been for a compromising approach. Failure to find a political solution... is harming Turkey in many ways."

Turkey occupied northern Cyprus in 1974 after a coup in Nicosia backed by the military junta then ruling Greece. In 1983 Turkish Cypriots proclaimed a state, recognised only by Ankara.

Russia praises Baker trip

MOSCOW (AP) — The Russian Foreign Ministry on Friday praised U.S. Secretary of States James Baker's Middle East trip as "an important step" in the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Sergei Yazstrzhembsky said chances "for progress in reaching a settlement" have never been so good.

Russia attributes the improved climate to the new Israeli government of Yitzhak Rabin "whose platform has elements opening real prospects for achieving practical accords," he said.

"We regard (Mr. Baker's trip) as an important step towards the preparation of the sixth round of bilateral Israeli-Arab talks and meetings of multilateral working groups," Mr. Yazstrzhembsky said.

Progress at the talks depends on whether all sides will by flexible and willing to compromise, he said.

The Russian Foreign Ministry is sending a special envoy to the Middle East for consultations with foreign ministers in the region, Mr. Yazstrzhembsky said.

Jordan Times
Tel: 667171

Lebanese hijacker and notorious French criminal escape from prison

OBE, Switzerland (AP) — Swiss police have launched a massive manhunt after a convicted Lebanese hijacker, one of France's most wanted men and two other dangerous criminals escaped from jail.

Hussein Hariri, a Lebanese serving a life prison sentence for hijacking an Air Afrique airliner and killing a French passenger in 1987, broke out of the top security Bochuz prison mid-morning, Vaud cantonal police said.

At his side was Frenchman Jacques Hyver, jailed for 10 years for holding a Geneva banker's family hostage. It was Mr. Hyver's second successful jailbreak. In 1987 he escaped from a French prison where he was serving a lengthy sentence for kidnapping the then vice-president of the French employers' organisation and murdering a night club owner. The 43-year-old tried to escape from Swiss prisons twice.

Two other convicts jailed for hostage-taking and assault, also fled. A fifth man was recaptured by police shortly after the breakout.

Prison director Andre Vallotton said the convicts overpowered prison staff and temporarily held them hostage. They seized a truck making deliveries to the prison and drove it through the perimeter fence. The men then commandeered a passing car and managed to shake off their police pursuers near Yverdon, a peaceful spa town near the French border.

Police sealed off roads in the area and brought in helicopters to help in the search. They found the car, but no trace of the four escapees.

A previous attempt to escape in March 1990 was thwarted at the last minute. He had managed to saw through the bars of his cell and climb down a rope, but he was detected by radar before he reached the outer fence.

Hariri would have been elibile for parole in the year 2003, but one month ago a local court sentenced him an additional two years for setting fire to his cell twice in 1990.

Switzerland's supreme court sentenced Hariri, now aged 26, to life imprisonment in February 1989. The court described Hariri as a cold blooded fanatic. It convicted him on seven counts.

Hariri commandeered an Air Afrique DC-10 on a flight from Brazzaville, Congo, to Paris in July 1987 to press demands for the release of Lebanese and Palestinians held by France, West Germany and Israel.

He demanded to be flown to Beirut but agreed to a refuelling stop in Geneva, where he shot dead 28-year-old Frenchman Xavier-Guillaume Beaulieu and seriously injured a flight attendant when his deadline for readying the plane expired.

Geneva police stormed the plane and arrested Hariri after crew members overpowered him and passengers began fleeing the plane. He was the lone hijacker.

At his trial he refused to testify about prosecution allegations that he was on a mission for the pro-Iranian Hizbollah group, the umbrella organisation blamed for holding most of the Western hostages in Lebanon. However, while in custody he reportedly claimed he had links with Hizbollah.

There was widespread speculation in the Swiss press that the kidnapping of three workers of the International Committee of the Red Corss (ICRC) in Lebanon was linked to attempts to pressure the Swiss government into concessions on Hariri.

Six Israeli-Arabs visit Tunisia

TEL AVIV (AP) — Six Israeli-Arab leaders, including a newly elected member of parliament, left Friday for Tunisia in what could be another chapter in Israel's strange relations with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

The group is to attend a cultural festival in the Tunisian city of Carthage, near the capital of Tunis that is headquarters to the PLO.

While the members would not say if they would meet PLO officials, the group includes Dr. Ahmad Tibi, who has been a bridge for indirect Israeli contacts with the organisation.

Israeli law forbids contacts with the PLO as a supposed "terrorist" organisation. But suggestions have been made to change the law to allow meetings unless they are aimed at harming the Jewish state.

Before his departure, Mr. Tibi told the Jerusalem Arabic daily Al Nahar that he saw his role "as trying to narrow the differences between Israel and the Palestinians" in the Middle East peace process.

He described himself as "quiet diplomat" and said mediation was more important since the election last month of the left-leaning government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

The Israeli-Arabs' visit to Tunis followed a public meeting last month between members of the Palestinian delegation to U.S.-backed peace talks and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

Police questioned them about the incident but filed no charges. Mr. Rabin later told reporters be considered such a meeting to be of marginal importance compared with success in the peace process.

Even before Mr. Rabin's election, the previous cabinet of Yitzhak Shamir of the right-wing Likud Party essentially looked the other way when Palestinian negotiators consulted privately with PLO officials.

Although Israel views the PLO as its arch enemy, it has indirectly negotiated several prisoner exchanges with the organisation. In 1981, the United States mediated an Israeli-PLO ceasefire along the Lebanon border.

The Israeli-Arab group, which includes lawmaker Hashem Mahameed of the Communist Party, will visit Egypt for talks with Osama Al-Baz, a senior adviser to President Hosni Mubarak, en route to next week's festival in Tunisia.

Another member of the group is Ahmad Darwish, an official of an Arab political party whose brother, Mahmoud Darwish, is a poet living in exile whose nationalist writings are admired by Palestinians.

The Israeli-Arab community, about 800,000 in population, has strong family and cultural ties to the Palestinian in the occupied territories. But unlike the 1.8 million Palestinians, they have Israeli citizenship.

Britain expels 3 Iranians

LONDON (R) — Britain Friday ordered three Iranians to leave within a week but denied it was retaliating for Tehran's expulsion of a British diplomat.

None of the trio was a diplomat, the Foreign Office said.

The three being ousted on "the grounds that their continued presence in the United Kingdom is not conducive to the public good for reasons of national security."

A Foreign Office spokeswoman said the expulsions were "totally unconnected" to Iran's decision this week to expel British diplomat Geoffrey Brammer by the end of July.

She said Britain's decision was the result of "painstaking investigations which predate Mr. Brammer's detention."

Iranian authorities arrested Mr. Brammer on June 17 accusing him of spying.

The Foreign Office named the Iranians being expelled as: Mehdi Sayed Sadeghi, Mahmoud Mehdi Soltani and Gassem Vakhshiteh. It said the first two had been working unofficially at the Iranian embassy and the third was a student.

The Foreign Office spokeswoman said Mr. Sadeghi was being deported "because of his involvement in unacceptable intelligence activities." The other two were being expelled for associating with the unnamed foreign intelligence service.

The spokeswoman declined to say whether the expulsions were connected to an Iranian death order against Indian-born British author Salman Rushdie.

Diplomatic relations between London and Tehran were severed in 1989 after then Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini issued the Fatwa on Mr. Rushdie, accused of blaspheming against Islam in his book "The Statanic Verses."

Relations were restored in September 1990 and had shown signs of improvement but analysts say the latest series of expulsions suggest a new coolness on Anglo-Iranian ties.

Asked whether Britain planned to retaliate over Mr. Brammer's expulsion, the spokeswoman replied, "we retain the right to expel any of their diplomats.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Lebanese troops take buildings from militias

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanese troops on Friday seized five buildings occupied by militias during the civil war after a government deadline expired for Lebanese to surrender arms and war booty, defence ministry sources said. Among the buildings reclaimed was a television station, the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC), which was run by the righting Lebanese Forces (LF) in the resort of Jounieh, north of Beirut. LBC resumed broadcasting on Friday from another location. Troops also moved into buildings held by the Druze Progressive Socialist Party (PSP), the Damascus-backed Shiite Muslim Amal movement, the pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) and one used by extremists. Lebanese troops on Thursday confiscated weapons from the LF, the PSP, Amal and the Syrian Social National Party. A one-month deadline set by the government for the surrender of unlicenced rifles and handguns expired on Tuesday. The militias were disbanded last year and ordered to hand over heavy and medium weapons but allowed to keep their light arms. The government is trying to tighten security ahead of Lebanon's first general elections in 20 years expected in August and September.

U.N. monitors fly to Somalia

NAIROBI (AP) — Kenyan authorities have allowed 47 unarmed international ceasefire monitors to fly to Somalia's capital, ending an eight-hour standoff. A U.N. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said authorities at Nairobi's international airport allowed the flight to leave for Mogadishu after talks between local officials and Mohammad Sahnoun, the U.N. special envoy to Somalia. The official had said earlier that the Kenyans had given no explanation for holding up the flight. Mr. Sahnoun was scheduled to follow the monitors in a separate plane. The United Nations is sending the monitors in an effort to improve security in Mogadishu, where fighting and looting have hampered humanitarian efforts. Andrew Natsios of the U.S. Agency for International Development estimates 2,000 people are dying daily in and around the devastated city. Somalia's interim president, Ali Mahdi Mohammad, and his rival General Mohammad Farrah Aideed agreed to the monitors as part of a United Nations-brokered ceasefire in early March. The ceasefire came after five months of fighting that killed more than 30,000 people. The first three monitors and an adviser arrived on July 6.

Insurgents kill four Turkish soldiers

BITLIS, Turkey (AP) — Turkish Kurdish rebels killed four soldiers and wounded four others in this southern province Thursday, the Anatolia news agency reported. The clash occurred near the village of Kolludere, when the guerrillas opened fire on troops on patrol, the agency said. The guerrillas are from the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), which has been fighting for self-rule since 1984 in southeastern Turkey, where about half of the country's 12 million Kurds live. More than 4,100 insurgents, soldiers and civilians have died in the clashes linked to the Kurdish independence bid.

Death toll in Cairo house collapse rises to 11

CAIRO (R) — At least 11 people were killed when a seven-storey house collapsed in Cairo early on Thursday, police said on Friday. A 12-year-old girl was pulled alive from the rubble 17 hours after the collapse in the impoverished Cairo district of Rod Al Farag. Her 42-year-old mother was the only other survivor rescued from the ruins. Residents said the owner of the building had illegally added four storeys.

Bombs hit banks, store in Turkish cities

ANKARA (R) — Petrol bombs hit seven bank offices in Istanbul and an Ankara drapery store overnight, causing damage but no casualties, the Anatoliah news agency said on Friday. An anonymous caller to newspapers claimed the Istanbul attacks for an outlawed group, the agency said, but did not name it. Turkey's most lethal extremist group Dev-Sol (Revolutionary Left), has claimed similar attacks in the past as well as many political killings. Hurriyet newspaper reported Dev-Sol said it was behind the wounding of two police guards outside the Turkish union of banks building in central Ankara on Thursday.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Les petites histoires presque vrais
18:05 Les Tortues Ninja
18:30 La Gymnastique
19:00 News in French
19:15 Fenetre sur
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Super Bloopers
21:00 Encounter
21:30 Saturday variety show
22:00 News in English
22:20 Feature Film: "Johny Belinda"

PRAYER TIMES

04:11 Fajr
05:41 (Sunrise) Duha
12:42 Dhuhr
16:23 'Asr
19:43 Maghreb
21:13 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifieh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrasanta Church Tel: 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Amman International Church Tel. 685326.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel: 811295.
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 654932
Church of Nazarene Tel.675691.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be fair and some clouds will appear at low altitudes. Winds will be northwesterly moderate to fresh, causing dust in desert areas. In Aqaba, it will be dusty at times, with northerly fresh winds and choppy seas.

	Min./Max. temp.
Amman	15 / 28
Aqaba	24 / 36
Deserts	13 / 30
Jordan Valley	22 / 35

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 27, Aqaba 36, Humidity readings: Amman 50 per cent, Aqaba 32 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Mohammad Al Shawish ... 658878
Dr. Bassam Karadsheh 796200
Dr. Kayed Halayqa 793522
Dr. Saeed Abu Hatab 649846
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

IRBID:
Dr. Ahmad Al Qanu (—)
Al Sharaa' pharmacy (275825)

ZARQA:
Dr. Ziad Ju'eitini (—)
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630941
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority ... 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amm ... 644281/6
Akileh Maternity, J. Amm 642441/2
Jabal Ammam Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Ammam 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Mussher Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37
Al-Abli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital .. (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09) 990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital .. (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital..... (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

09:45 Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, (RJ)
09:45 New Delhi (RJ)
10:15 Dhahran (RJ)
10:30 Damascus (RJ)
10:30 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
11:00 Colombo (RJ)
11:00 Abu Dhabi, Doha (RJ)
11:15 Beirut (RJ)
17:45 Cairo (RJ)
18:25 Istanbul (RJ)
19:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
19:25 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
19:30 London (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

11:30 Sanaa (IY)
18:30 Paris (AF)
19:20 Rome, Beirut (AZ)
20:35 Cairo (MS)
21:45 Dubai (EM)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:15 Beirut (RJ)
07:20 Damascus (RJ)
12:30 Amsterdam, New York
12:40 Istanbul (RJ)
12:45 Paris, Brussels (RJ)
12:50 Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
13:45 Cairo (RJ)
13:55 London (RJ)
21:15 Larnaca (RJ)
21:30 Jeddah (RJ)
21:45 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
22:30 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
23:00 Dubai (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

05:55 Cyprus (CY)
09:15 Beirut (ME)
12:30 Sanaa (IY)
21:30 Cairo (MS)
22:45 Dubai (EA)
23:30 Damascus, Paris (AF)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple (red)	550/ 300
Apricot	400/ 350
Banana	500 / 450
Banana (Mukammar)	550 / 500
Beans	560 / 300
Cabbage	90 / 40
Carrot	240/ 200
Cauliflower	240/ 180
Cucumbers (large)	80 / 40
Cucumbers (small)	140 / 90
Eggplant	130 / 30
Garlic	550 / 450
Lemon	700 / 600
Marrow (large)	130 / 70
Marrow (small)	260 / 200
Onion (dry)	130 / 80
Onion (green)	150/ 100
Oranges	440 / 360
Peaches	540 / 400
Peas	420/ 360
Plums	550/ 280
Pepper (hot)	200 / 150
Pepper (sweet)	140 / 90
Potato	180 / 120
Sweet Melon	210/ 160
Tomato	60 / 30
Watermelon	50/ 20

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Departing World Bank official expresses confidence in national economic policies

AMMAN (J.T.) — Vice President of the World Bank Caio Koch-Wesser has ended a two-day visit to Jordan and left Amman after meeting with His Majesty King Hussein, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Jordanian officials to discuss Jordan-World Bank cooperation in monetary and economic affairs.

Mr. Koch-Wesser, responsible for Near Middle East and North African Affairs at the World Bank, met the King Thursday in the presence of Minister of Planning Ziad Fariz, with whom he had discussions earlier.

Crown Prince Hassan stressed in his meeting with Mr. Koch-Wesser the importance of a regional development perspective and the need for the people of the same region to embark on meaningful and serious cooperation with natural resources.

It is not the theories about economic development that help develop the region, but rather regional political and economic decisions that can help achieve that goal, said the Crown Prince.

Discussions at the meeting focused on ways to promote cooperation in the region which could help boost political, economic and social development.

Mr. Koch-Wesser said the World Bank intends to help push forward efforts aimed at attaining peace, particularly the negotiations tackling cooperation in the economy, water and the environment.

Mr. Koch-Wasser had met with Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker in the presence of Dr. Fariz and Safwan Bataineh, the prime minister's economic advisor.

According to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, they discussed Jordan's economy, the role of the private sector in exporting national products, unemployment and poverty.

The prime minister stressed that Jordan was totally committed to the peace process in accordance with U.N. Security Council resolutions and the regional cooperation.

Mr. Koch-Wesser said that the World Bank has confidence that the government's policies were enabling the national economy to achieve sustainable growth. He said so far all indications point to the success of the implementation of the economic restructuring programme agreed on with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) giving positive indications of economic growth

In an interview published in the Jordan Times earlier this month, Dr. Bataineh noted that Jordan's economy has come out of an eight-year recession and was set to show greater growth this year than forecast by the IMF.



World Bank Vice-President Caio Koch-Wesser discusses economic affairs with His Majesty King Hussein



Princess Basma, Julie Andrews inspect development programmes for women

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, chairperson of the Queen Alia Fund (QAF), met in Wadi Moussa with actress Julie Andrews, who is also Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). Princess Basma and Mrs. Andrews visited Al-Tayibeh Social Services Centre in Wadi Moussa, run by QAF, to promote the development and rehabilitation of women. The visit included an inspection of the social and development activities provided by the centre such as weaving, embroidery, sewing and handicrafts. It also included a slide show of the planned ceramics project which will revive the ancient and famous industry in the region.

During the visit, Princess Basma announced an expansion of the current facilities at Al-Tayibeh Centre to accommodate increasing demand for the centre's activities.

The Princess and Mrs. Andrews were accompanied by Richard Walden, the president of Operation USA, non-governmental American aid organisation.

Water crisis to worsen by 2010; JWA: Stricter rationing expected

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The water shortage crisis in Jordan will assume larger proportions by the year 2000, when the country will have tapped all its available resources without meeting the needs of its growing population.

Depletion of non-renewable underground resources, dramatic increase in population, improvement of standards of living and providing water services to 100 per cent of citizens will force Jordan to look for "untraditional" sources of water, according to Mu'taz Belbeisi, director general of the Jordan Water Authority (JWA).

Jordan was able to maintain a sufficient level of supply of water to its 3.5 million people until 1988 when the demand became larger than the amount the country could pour into its network, which currently covers 97 per cent of the population.

In 1991, there was a shortage of 47 million cubic metres, and the amount of water supplied this year is 85 million cubic metres less than needed.

The increased demand of water forced the country to heavily mine its non-renewable underground resources, which, together with renewable resources, account for 80 per cent of drinking water in Jordan, Mr. Belbeisi said at a recent lecture at the Orthodox Club in Amman.

Mr. Belbeisi said Jordan will start pumping water from Al Disi Area in the south in 1996, but the country's last large renewable underground resource will not solve the water problem in Jordan due to an increase in demand. A near doubling of Jordan's population is expected to occur by 2010 when the country's population is projected to reach 7.3 million people.



Mu'taz Belbeisi

Mr. Belbeisi said that under a plan worked out by the Water Authority for organising water consumption in the country, Jordanians will be getting less water per day than the internationally set standards. Every Jordanian citizen will be getting 188 liters of water per day while international standards put the amount needed at 200 liters. But considering the severe dearth of resources and the drastic rate of population growth — 3.8 per cent annually — Mr. Belbeisi said Jordan had no option but to adopt a strict rationing policy.

Other measures suggested by Belbeisi included controlling the amount of water wasted more in the supply network, which he said is old and must be replaced.

Mr. Belbeisi said Jordan does not collect bills for 54 per cent of the water it supplies because 30 per cent of it is lost to leakage and other problems in the supply network while 24 per cent is lost due to illegal practices by citizens and problems with consumption meters.

Jordan mainly depends on rainfall for its water supplies and is thus largely affected by the cycles of drought that periodically hit the country. It receives an avarage rainfall of 8,426 million cubic metres, with the concentration of rainfall ranging from 50 mlm at the edge of the desert in the east to 600 mlm in the high areas.

Eighty-five per cent of the rainfall evaporates, 10 per cent go into surface water and five per cent end up in the renewable under ground resources. While underground water is mainly used for drinking water, surface water supplies the agricultural and industrial sectors.

"We need to save every drop of water," said Mr. Belbeisi, pointing to the limitation of options the country has in securing new supplies of water.

Mr. Belbeisi said Jordan is not currently considering desalination as a potential resource because of its high cost but might have to resort to it after the year 2000 when there will be no untapped traditional resources.

By the year 2010, he said, the shortages will start to grow and the crisis will be much harder to contain unless new discoveries are made in the energy field.

Infant mortality rate reduced; Ministry has more plans to ensure healthy childhoods

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan has reduced its infant mortality rate to 37 per every 1,000 children born from 216 deaths for every 1,000 children born in the early 1950s, said Health Minister Aref Bataineh.

The Kingdom is considered among the leading countries of the world with vaccinations for infants and children, said the minister in an address at the opening of a seminar on modern pediatric treatment on Friday.

The minister said that the government was doing all in its power to ensure safe childhood and the Ministry of Health was planning to investigate causes of child illness.

He said special attention is being given to early detection of disabilities among young infants, which often lead to death.

Jordan Medical Association (JMA) President Dr. Ishaq Maraqa said that the meeting's participants were focusing attention on early diagnosis of disabilities and other illnesses infecting children and infants in Jordan. He said that the private and public sector doctors in Jordan were giving special attention to pediatric care at all levels.



Aref Bataineh

The meeting was organised at the Professional Association Complex by the Jordanian Pediatric Society, whose president, Dr. Mahdi Abul Dabab, told delegates that discussions aimed at upgrading knowledge and offered a opportunity for furthering cooperation to protect the health of children in the Kingdom.

Arab thinker — regional solidarity only weapon to use against foreign powers

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein has sent a cable of good wishes to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on the anniversary of the July 23 Revolution.

In the cable the King wished the president continued health and the Egyptian people further progress.

On the eve of the anniversary Arab thinker Ahmad Hamroush delivered a lecture at the Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation in Amman tackling the 1952 July Revolution and Egypt's policies at the pan-Arab level.

When the revolution broke out its leaders had nothing in mind about pan- Arabism, but were rather concerned with toppling the regime, said Mr. Hamroush.

It was only on the second anniversary of the revolution that the late president Nasser started to involve Egypt in pan-Arab affairs. Nasser's call for pan-Arabism and unity among Arab countries received much applause by Arabs everywhere, he said. He added that the late president Nasser had declared pan-Arabism as the most vital weapon for Arabs to defend their nation in the face of foreign domination.

Mr. Hamroush recalled in his lecture Egypt's national stand under President Nasser, particularly with regard to Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Algeria, with Palestine getting most of the Cairo leadership's attention.

He said under Nasser, Egypt tried to unite with Syria and backed Yemen and Iraq's revolution and the Algerian struggle against French colonialism.

Police capture gang of embezzlers

AMMAN (J.T.) — A seven-member gang of embezzlers and thieves has been caught by the police following a spate of frauds, embezzlements and other related crimes in the capital.

A spokesman for the police authorities in the Amman region said that the seven signed forged cheques that bounced and defrauded local firms.

The spokesman said the group used false cheques for goods had concerned and were finally reported by a bank. The gang had sent the bank 20 false JD 2,000 cheques, prompting the police to act immediately.

The spokesman said that investigations led to the capture of the seven men and the seizure of a typwriter, several cheques, forgery equipment stolen passports and family books, and other equipment.

According to the spokesman, a large sum of the cash obtained by fraud has been retrieved and the gang members have admitted to commiting their embezzling and defrauding not only in Amman but also in many other parts of the Kingdom

Meanwhile, the police reported that six people were killed and 195 others were injured in 359 road accidents between July 11 and 18.

The police said that there were 63 accidents fewer than the previous week, registering a decline in the number of dead by seven and the injured by 18.

Indonesian envoy to discuss trade

AMMAN (J.T.) — Indonesia is sending out invitations for heads of state to attend next months non-aligned summit conference in Jakarta.

Indonesian Minister of Trade Arifin Siregar, who arrived with the invitation in Amman Thursday evening, was expected to deliver the official notice to His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said that Mr. Siregar, who is spending several days in Jordan, will also be meeting with Industry and Trade Minister Abdullah Ensour for discussions on Jordanian-Indonesian trade relations and economic cooperation.

Dr. Ensour and the visiting Indonesian trade minister were expected to hold meetings Saturday before the envoy proceeds to Syria and Lebanon to deliver similar messages from the Indonesian leader to the heads of state.

House speakers pledge full attention on press law debate

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Speakers of the Upper and Lower House of Parliament have pledged to continue cooperation with the Jordanian media and to give due attention to the soon to be debated press and publications laws and the Jordan Press Association (JPA) laws.

Parliament sources said that the Lower House was expected to take up the press and publication draft law at its coming session Sunday.

Senate Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi pledged that his house would give due attention to the laws which he said would enable the JPA to assume its vital role in all political, social and economic affairs in Jordan and would boost the democratic process in the country.

Mr. Lawzi said journalists have a major role to play and assume serious responsibilities of reflecting Jordan's image to the outside world.

The speaker of the Lower House, Dr. Abdul Latif Arabiyat, said that the house members were keen on maintaining dialogue with the JPA, particularly on matters related to the press and publications and JPA laws.

These two laws are instrumental in promoting democracy in Jordan and the Lower House is giving full attention to the JPA and supporting its endeavours, said Dr. Arabiyat.

Both speakers gave the pledge at separate meetings with the JPA President and board members who pledged journalists cooperation in all media matters and in reporting the Parliament discussions.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King sends condolence to Franjieh family

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Thursday sent a cable to Franjieh family in Lebanon, condoling them over the death of the late former Lebanese Prime Minister Sulaiman Franjieh.

Sharif Zeid visiting Turkey

ANKARA (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker is currently making a three-day official visit to Turkey at an invitation from Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel. Sharif Zeid will meet during his visit with several Turkish officials for talks on ways of enhancing Jordanian-Turkish relations. The prime minister, who is accompanied by Minister of Public Works and Housing Saad Hayel Srour, was received at the airport by the Turkish minister of state and the Jordanian charge d'affaires in Ankara.

Safe motherhood workshop opens Saturday

AMMAN (Petra) — Labour Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabariti and Health Minister Aref Bataineh Saturday will open at the Marriott Hotel a two-day workshop on safe motherhood and birth spacing, organised by the National Population Council, in cooperation with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Health Ministry. Taking part in the workshop will be a number of professionals from the public and private sectors as well as international bodies.

WHAT'S GOING ON

JERASH FESTIVAL

☆ Syrian artist Dureid Laham's play "Al Asfoura Al Saeeda" (the happy bird) at Al Hussein Youth City's Palace of Culture — 11 a.m.

☆ Dureid Laham's play "Sane' Al Matar" (the rain maker) at the southern theatre of Jerash — 9 p.m.

Exhibitions

☆ Exhibition entitled "Exploring Science" at the British Council.

☆ Ceramic sculpture exhibition entitled "Remains of Kaghou" by Iraqi artist Halim Mahdi at Baladna Art Gallery.

Three-week Hussein camp ends on inspiring note

AL QASR (Petra) — The three-week Hussein camp for work, held at Rabba Agricultural School in the south of Jordan, ended Thursday. Taking part in the camp organised by the Ministry of Education, were 91 students from the Ministry of Education and the Armed Forces schools.

Participants built boundary walls and shoulders for schools in the Shobak area.

Participants also carried out various cultural and sports activities and visited a number of historical places in the region.

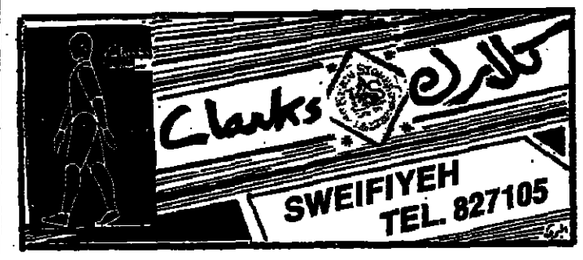
Also Thursday, the 5th national gathering for Jordanian girls was concluded.

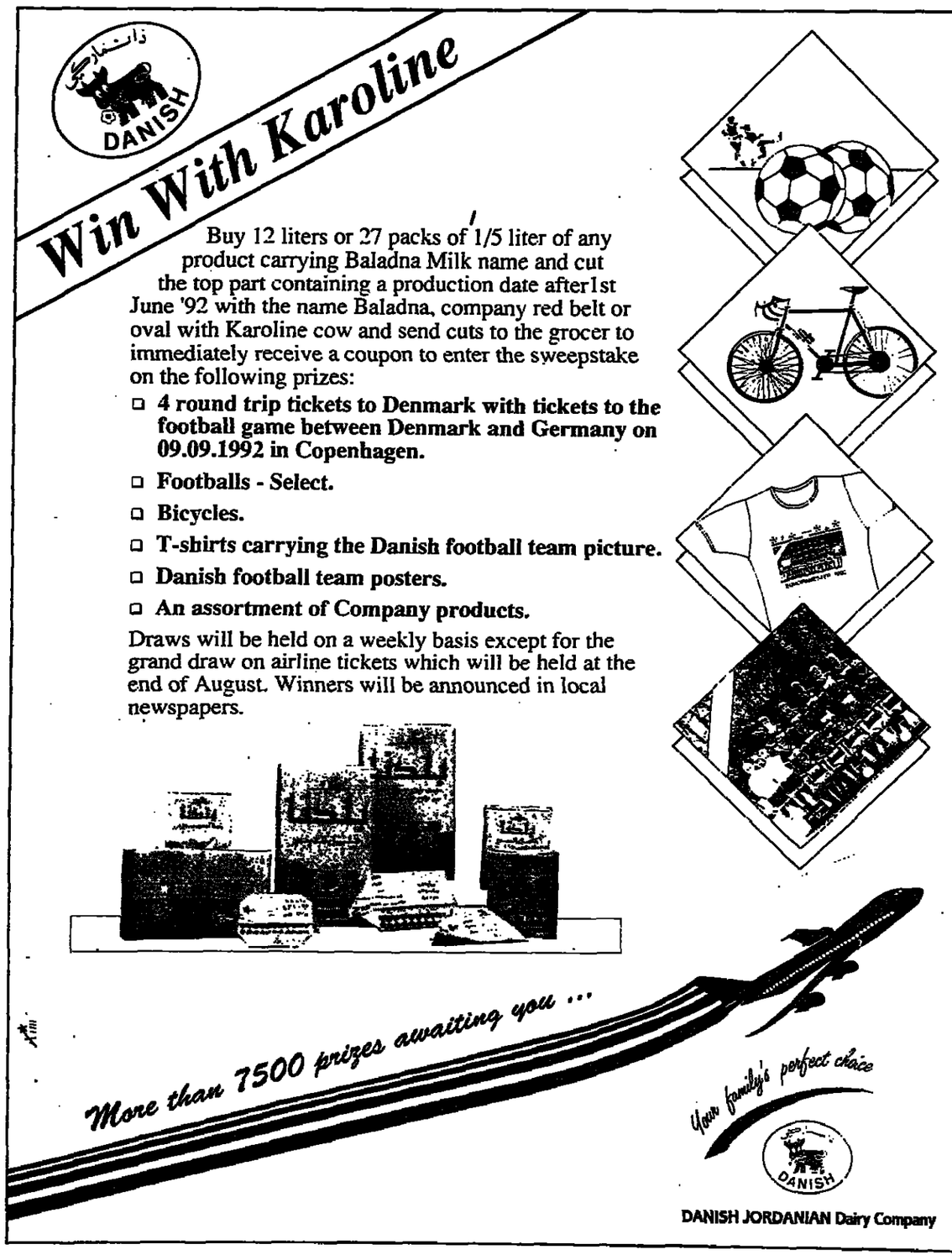
Taking part in the gathering were 70 Jordanian girls.

Addressing the closing ceremony was Minister of Water and Irrigation Samir Kawar, who praised the idea of holding such gatherings. He said that Jordan was passing through a delicate stage, created by local, regional and international events, which coincided with political, economic and social changes. Given these circumstances, Jordanians should live up to the challenges and overcome the difficulties facing them, he said.

He also called on the Jordanian youth to contribute effectively to the building of an ideal society based mainly on national belonging, dedication and allegiance to the Hashemite leadership.

He stressed the important role women can play in achieving national goals.





Jordan Times

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Baker move to White House could affect Mideast

By Carol Giacomo
Reuter

JEDDAH — If James Baker is recruited to salvage U.S. President George Bush's reelection campaign, will it undermine prospects for Middle East peace?

That was the question being asked as the U.S. secretary of state jetted around the Middle East this week, trying to revive peace talks as his boss's reelection prospects were flagging.

With Mr. Bush trailing democratic challenger Bill Clinton in opinion polls, a job shift for Mr. Baker, who was upbeat after meetings with talks participants Israel, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinians, could be seen as a sign of desperation.

Some experts say Mr. Bush might lose as much as he gains by the move because he could come under criticism for reassigning the secretary of state, respected in international circles, to domestic political tasks.

Tangible progress in the peace process could boost Mr. Bush's attractiveness in an election year, especially to America's Jewish voters.

Arabs, meanwhile, are worried that Mr. Clinton and the Democratic Party platform are too pro-Israel. Diplomats say Arabs see Mr. Bush and Mr. Baker as probably the least pro-Israeli American leaders since the Jewish state was created in 1948.

Although Mr. Baker would prefer to stay at the State Department, Mr. Bush has been urged to acknowledge help is needed and enlist Mr. Baker, his friend, political confidant and fishing partner of 30 years, in his campaign effort.

In the face of such political turmoil, it was inevitable Mr. Baker would be asked publicly why he might now abandon the peace process he put in motion.

"You ought not to believe everything you heard in the paper," Mr. Baker said at a Cairo news conference, commenting on speculation in U.S. newspapers of an imminent move. "There is no decision that I am in fact going off."

"You see me actively involved here now in the peace process and I hope and believe I will be actively involved in the days and weeks ahead," he added.

A careful lawyer by trade, Mr. Baker has pointedly not ruled out the possibility of a White House post.

Mr. Bush gave Mr. Baker the green light to plunge into the morass of Middle East peacemaking after the 1991 Gulf war and persuaded him to keep at it when he became frustrated by obstacles posed by Israel's ousted hardline Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Hafez Al Assad, president of Israel's arch foe Syria.

But it is in large measure Mr. Baker's tireless shuttle diplomacy, his negotiating ability and his more even-handed approach that drew Arabs and Israelis into a process some experts doubted would ever begin.

All sides seem to trust him and many think his departure would be a major blow.

"In all honesty, I cannot see a cause for optimism (in the peace talks) at the present time, especially since Baker himself will not be free from now on to pursue the peace process," an Egyptian newspaper commentator wrote this week.

An editorial in a Saudi newspaper warned that for Mr. Bush to retain his reputation in the region, he must continue to allow Mr. Baker to act as a "dependable ally" in the negotiations.

Robert Neumann, a former U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia, told Reuters that "for the sake of our foreign policy, the departure of Baker is not a good thing. He's very skillful and has tremendous authority."

Mr. Baker has been rumoured to be considering a leave of absence, rather than resignation, so he could resume the job after the November 3 election — whether Mr. Bush wins or loses.

Mr. Neumann said Mr. Baker could absent himself temporarily with little damage if he managed to first get Israel and Palestinians moving on a credible self-government plan for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Mr. Baker is working at that task now.

An Arab diplomat, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said he admired Mr. Baker's strength and his commitment to the peace mission but believes the peace process could endure without him.

"I think the peace talks have become administration policy and even if Clinton wins, I think the process would continue," he said.

White House race — baby boomers vs. World War II

By Irwin Arieff
Reuter

WASHINGTON — The race for the White House is shaping up as a battle between generations , the baby-boomers versus World War II.

With independent Ross Perot out of the picture, the campaign boils down to President George Bush versus Bill Clinton:

— A 68-year-old and a 45-year-old.

— A veteran of World War II against a man who avoided military service during the Vietnam war, and

— A clean-shaven martini drinker versus a man who sported a fuzzy beard and experimented with marijuana in the 1960s.

The grandfather Bush was born June 12, 1924, and left school 18 years later to become the navy's youngest World War II fighter pilot.

Though from a wealthy family, he grew up during the depression era, when life was hard for most



Bill Clinton



George Bush

Americans.

The boyish-looking Clinton — who is widely believed to be giving his blondish hair a grey tint during the campaign to appear older than his years — was born a year after World War II ended, on August 19, 1946.

He grew up during the turbulent 1960s, when life was more comfortable but society was in turmoil.

All values were open to scrutiny as a younger generation rebelled against tradition, questioning the existing standards for everything from music to personal appearance to family structure to drugs.

No value was more open to challenge than the traditional respect for the military, as the Vietnam war raged on and young people flocked to the anti-war movement.

Mr. Clinton initially got a student deferment, then signed up for an officer training programme that would have deferred service while he earned a law degree.

He later decided to put his name in for the military draft, only to draw a high lottery number assuring he would not be called.

Mr. Clinton denies evading service, saying he opened himself to a draft only to be bypassed by the lottery then in effect.

But the issue dogged Mr. Clinton during the primary season and is certain to resurface in the fall campaign as Mr. Bush cites his own military service and his leadership in the Gulf war as among his qualifications for public office.

"I hope that I will pass the test of commitment to my country. I am proud ... of having served my country," Mr. Bush has said in a remark that appeared to invite comparison with his Democratic rival.

As for marijuana, Mr. Clinton admitted experimenting with the drug only after being repeatedly pressed on the issue, and even then said he had not inhaled — an admission that drew hoots rather than praise from his fellow baby boomers, most of whom had themselves experimented with the drug.

After all, even Clarence Thomas, President Bush's most recent pick for the Supreme Court, had admitted marijuana use, a fact that did not figure at all in the senate battle over his confirmation for a high court seat.

But Mr. Clinton explained that he had tried to inhale but was literally unable to.

The baby boom generation — a huge bulge in the population pipeline created by the large numbers of Americans born in the aftermath of World War II — is now in middle age.

Mr. Clinton neither smokes nor drinks, describing himself as obsessed with self-control because of an alcoholic stepfather who beat his mother while Clinton was still a boy.

Though they grew up during an intensely political era, the boomers have never voted in the same proportion as older Americans, according to surveys.

But this year they are expressing a far greater interest in the campaign, according to a recent study of the electorate by the Times Mirror Centre for the People and the Press.

For the first time, boomers are as likely as seniors to say they are "absolutely certain" they will vote in 1992, the centre reported earlier this month.

Law against rights?

THE EGYPTIAN Human Rights Organisation has been dismayed and is expressing grave concern at the latest law to combat terrorism pushed by the government through parliament. The new law not only stiffens the penalty for membership in a terrorist organisation. It also introduces wide powers of administrative detention against suspects.

The Egyptian regime has all the reasons to worry about the recent actions of Muslim extremists, whether against government officials, Christians or ordinary people.

Without attempting to defend the Muslim extremists, however, we must mention the fact that they may have been pushed against the wall by the practices of successive Egyptian presidents. In the days of Gamal Abdul Nasser, the Muslim Brotherhood, from which some of the extremists splintered, was victimised, its leaders executed or imprisoned and tortured for many years. Anwar Sadat attempted to use them against his peace-with-Israel opponents but he soon turned against them and sent them into jails. And even with Hosni Mubarak's "democracy" the Islamist factions are still denied political party status and other rights. Instead of giving Islamists more say in the political life, the authorities opted for more oppressive measure that, according to the Human Rights Organisation, is a "new setback for human rights in Egypt." The organisation, ironically and pointedly believes it itself is being targetted by the new measures. It says those measures are a violation of the Egyptian constitution itself.

The setback for the human rights of one fourth of the Arab people is a serious matter, especially that most of the Arab World is still governed by oppressive regimes. Egypt, the most populous in the Arab World and the Arabs' leadership centre, cannot afford, nor should it tolerate, suppression of the majority under a "tribal" democracy. If the Egyptians by their sheer numbers, by their central location in the Arab World or their openness to the West, want to lead the Arab World as they have always wanted, they can only do so by introducing proper and genuine pluralism and true democracy. Suppression and intolerance only increase and fuel extremism. Extremism cannot be contained only by the use of force.

Besides across-the-board measures will not affect only extremists and terrorists. As the Egyptian Human Rights Organisation said, the new measures lend themselves to being applied easily to "confront men of opinion and thought, political opposition and human rights activists." If this is how the Egyptian organisation sees the new measures then there is something fundamentally wrong in Egypt's political system as indeed manifested by the ruling National Democratic Party's monopoly of power.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily newspaper urged the United States to refrain from committing aggression on Iraq under the pretext of enforcing the will of the U.N. inspectors wishing to enter the Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture building in Baghdad. The paper said that any aggression on Iraq at this stage is bound to have adverse effects on the Middle East peace process, which the U.S. administration is very keen on promoting and winning credibility for the president who is running for a second term in office. Furthermore, any aggression is bound to negatively affect Mr. Bush's campaign, causing him to lose credibility in the eyes of the American public many of whom are inclined to support a presidential candidate who is more concerned about domestic affairs rather than foreign adventures, said the daily. Over and above, Iraq's refusal to allow U.N. inspectors to enter the building can by no means justify an aggression on the Iraqi people by any standards and norms, added the daily. The world is holding its breath over the tense situation created by the U.S. and the threat it has been issuing against Iraq; and many are apprehensive that Washington might, as usual, enforce a Security Council resolution to pave the ground for a new military action against the Iraqi people, the paper said. It added that any move by the western powers, even if it is backed by the U.N. Security Council, which is totally under Washington's influence, is bound to backfire.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i Arabic daily said that Egypt, which has offered to play a mediating role between Israel and Syria, is in no position to do that especially if it still considers itself part of the Arab World. Abdul Rahim Omar said that president Mubarak, who has met with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, is also in no position to mediate between Israel and the Palestinians at a time when Washington is not offering anything to the Palestinians but giving billions of dollars in loan guarantees to the Israelis. He said that Egypt's position was weak and undetermined in the Libyan dispute with the West and it chose to 'support the enemies of the Arabs in the Iraq-Kuwait affair and therefore it is not expected to side by Syria or the Palestinians. Furthermore, said the writer, the Egyptian government is still adamantly refusing to allow Gazans, who carry Egyptian travel documents, to enter Egypt as they have nowhere else to go and Egyptian writers and columnists in the press have been inciting the Gulf states against the Palestinian people's presence in the Gulf. Indeed, Cairo has been dancing to the tunes of the U.S.-Israelis alliance after having reached a separate peace treaty with the Jewish state, he said. The writer said that through its current behaviour, in support of Israel and the United States, which are trying to enforce their own peace formulae on the Arabs, Cairo is trying to prevent Arabs from criticising Egypt over its shameful action in reaching a separate treaty with the enemy of the Arab Nation

THE WEEK IN PRINT

All citizens should be allowed participation in political life within Constitution's boundaries

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

In the past week, the local dailies gave prominence to a tour of the Middle East region by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, the prospects of peace in the region, Arab and domestic affairs.

Al Ra'i daily said that everyone was happy to hear the nice words of the U.S. secretary, but people are awaiting deeds to back these words. The words lose their touch if they are not put into force and if they are repeated to offer mere lip-service to the people of the region, it said.

James Baker should hear clear and firm words from Jordan that it cannot tolerate further pressure and intimidation from the United States and its agents in the region, said a columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily.

Tareq Masarweh said that the American secretary of state was pressuring Jordan and other countries by bribery or military intimidation and terrorism and this time **the U.S. secretary is coming to the region** to give credibility to his president and **win Jewish votes for his election.**

It seems that Mr. Baker's tour has been agreed on between Mr. Rabin and Mr. Bush since the moment the former acceeded to power in the Jewish state said Taher Al Udwan in Al Dustour daily.

The writer said the presidential campaign, has come with **U.S. promises for the loan guarantees in order to win Jewish votes** in the coming election, and the tour is not really motivated by the desire to give impetus to the peace process.

His views were backed by his colleague in Al Dustour, Hamadeh Faraaneh, who said that Mr. Baker's tour aimed partly to give momentum to the peace process, but was primarily designed to brighten the Bush administration's image and give credibility to President Bush in the coming elections.

For this reason, he said Mr. Baker also went to Syria and Lebanon to persuade their leaders of the need to take part in the multilateral negotiations, the phase of the peace process which both countries have been boycotting.

Al Dustour daily said that Mr. Baker heard firm and loud and clear words from His Majesty King Hussein about Jordan's position regarding the peace process. It said that the King made it clear that Jordan can only accept a peace that can be fair to the coming generations which means full implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions and the safeguarding of the rights of the Palestinian people.

It is understood that the U.S. administration is keen on quick and fruitful results for Mr. Baker's tour of the region in the past week because, such results would augur well for the Bush presidential campaign, said Mohammad Kawash in Al Dustour.

The writer said that Mr. Baker, who is seeking Israel's support for the president in exchange for the loan guarantees, is desperate to get the peace process moving again to give credibility to the president. But, he said, if Washington is really concerned over giving impetus to the peace process and in gaining the Jewish votes, it must not do that at the expense of the Palestinian people's rights since that can never contribute towards a just peace.

A columnist in Sawt Al Shaab daily expressed fear that the United States could succeed in attaining a separate Israeli peace accord, with the help of Egypt, without consulting with the other Arab parties.

Salameh Ekour said that Mr. Rabin desires to reach such an accord and he is backed in his policies by the U.S. administration and Egypt, as is clear from the campaign in its state-controlled press.

We are afraid that the Palestinians would fall in the Egyptian-U.S.-Israeli trap and reach a separate deal with Mr. Rabin, warned the writer.

Referring to the **settlement programme** in the occupied Arab territories, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily said that with the advent of the Labour government, with Mr. Rabin at its head, the U.S. administration has come out in total support of Israel's policies.

Mahmoud al Rimawi said that now that Mr. Rabin has offered a temporary freeze of settlements, the U.S. is claiming that the ball is now in the Arab countries' court and they have to offer concessions to reach a settlement.

The writer said that the Arabs are firmly holding on to their rights and would not accept less than the implementation of U.N. resolutions.

Samir Qitami, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab, said that while Israel is declaring its intention to freeze the settlements, it is also facilitating the absorption of more and more Russian Jews.

The columnist said that following the collapse of the Soviet Union many thought that the Jewish immigration would decline, but it turned out that the **Jews continue to come,** according to Israeli media. In the first six months of this year the number exceeded 100,000.

Turning to the **sanctions on Iraq,** Taher Al Udwan said in Al Dustour that the pressure on Jordan to stop sending food supplies to Iraq is unjustified.

The sanctions are serving the U.S. and Israel and the interests of their allies, but not those of Jordan, and the Arab Nation, said the writer.

Turkey's borders with Iraq are wide open, with all commodities finding their way to the Iraqi markets, but no one is raising any cry about this fact, he said.

The writer said that Jordan has all the right to reject American pressures and has the right to continue to prevent the starvation of the innocent civilian population of Iraq.

Referring to the current **debate in Parliament over the political parties,** Taher Al Udwan **criticised** the stands of the Upper House of Parliament and the minsiter of youth regarding **the ban on students and Jordanian youth involvment in political parties.**

There are more than one million students in the country and if these are added to the Armed Forces and the Public Security, who are also not allowed to enter into politics the majority of the Jordanian people would be denied the right to get involved in political life, said the writer.

The minister of youth said that all those affiliated to youth centres and sports clubs will not be allowed to get involved in political affairs, the writer said. He added that democracy would not be fulfilled if the current trend is allowed to continue.

His views were echoed by Salah Abdul Samad in Al Ra'i Arabic daily, who said that **Parliament members have nothing to fear if the teachers and the students are involved in political affairs.**

There is a law to be respected and as long as everyone realises these fact there can be no chance for the schools, as Parliament members fear, to be transformed into political arenas.

If we deprive the 80,000 teachers, together with more than a million students, of the right to be involved in political parties, we are not promoting the cause of democracy in the country, said Ahmad Dabbas in Sawt Al Shaab.

He said that pluralism and democracy require the involvement of all people, and their interaction, in socio-political and economic issues. Under the Jordanian Constitution, all citizens are allowed to get into parties, said Dabbas.

Mohammad Daoudieh said that the teachers are not only entitled to get into parties, but they are also supposed to have their own union. The Al Dustour columnist said that **all citizens should be entitled to be involved in socio-economic and political matters as long as they exercise their rights within the Constitution.**

LETTERS

Whose land and whose peace?

To the Editor:

The phrase "land for peace" has become quite a familiar one since the Madrid talks last October. Each time the peace talks delegations met the media's use of this phrase has mounted. However, one must ask what exactly is meant by this phrase?

To answer this question one must go back to U.N. Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967, when the concept was first introduced to the Arab-Israeli conflict. U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 emphasised the "inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every state in the area can live in security." It also called for the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories it occupied in the June 1967 war. These territories were further and specifically defined as the West Bank of Jordan (including Jerusalem), the Gaza Strip, the Golan, and the Sinai. Although all members of the U.N. Security Council, including France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States, accepted Resolution 242 and all called for Israel's withdrawal from these occupied territories, it was not until August 4, 1970, that Israel finally officially approved this resolution. In spite of this, Israel did not implement the resolution and went further arguing that negotiations had to take place before any withdrawal could be considered.

The prime minister, Menachem Begin, and the Likud Party argued that "the resolution merely applied to undefined captured territory, and its terms could be satisfied by a substantial withdrawal from only one region, such as the Sinai." However, this argument was refuted by the resolution's author, Lord Caradon, when he stated that "it was from the occupied territories that the resolution called for withdrawal."

Israel, nevertheless continued to reject all peace initiatives taken to resolve this problem since 1967.

Mr. Shamir, and now Mr. Rabin, maintain the position that Israel will not give up one inch of these lands — for peace or otherwise — and claim that any demands made on Israel to do this are unreasonable and a sign of lack of good faith in negotiating peace.

Is Israel's stand on this issue justified? Before one can give up land for any reason, one must actually possess this land. Israel is not the legal owner of the lands in question, and thus it cannot reasonably expect to exchange it for anything. The legality of the ownership of the occupied territories was clarified in 1967 in Resolution 242 — a fact stated and endorsed by all Security Council members. These lands undeniably belong to the Arab people.

The issue of land for peace is actually misunderstood. Israel's unfaltering stand over retaining its so-called possession of these territories has caused this misunderstanding to emerge over the years. In negotiating for a lasting peace Israel is not the one being forced to give up land for peace. Rather it is the Palestinian people who are demanded to give up their homeland for peace. The conditions being put forth by Israel in all the peace talks, including allowing the Palestinians' autonomy and self-rule, but refusing to approach the concept of a Palestinian state (as affirmed by Resolution 242), is in actuality an unreasonable demand that the Palestinians compromise and give up their lands in return for a lasting peace with the state of Israel.

The concept of "land for peace" must be reclarified to all parties concerned and any negotiations for peace must be based on the text of Resolution 242. It must not be misunderstood or forgotten that the land in question is that of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the Golan, as defined by Resolution 242. The occupier must always be defined as the state of Israel and the legal owner of these lands the Arab people. The continuous use of this phrase allows the world community watching the peace process to ignorantly think that Israel is being asked to give up part of its land to achieve peace with its greedy neighbours. The truth of the matter is: Israel is not being asked to give up land, but rather to return land it has illegally occupied for over forty years, in defiance of international law and U.N. resolutions. In other words, the correct and more accurate phrase to be used in this context should be "The return of land for peace."

Ghadah Mahmoud,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

طهّزامن الأصل

U.S., allies plan ultimatum

(Continued from page 1)

Saud Al Faisal would not comment on the escalation of rhetoric from Washington and its Western allies.

Limiting his remarks to an attack on Irq for defying the U.N., he said: "The flaunting of U.N. resolutions by Iraq is disturbing not only to Saudi Arabia but also to the international community."

"We are pleased the U.N. is taking this into consideration now," he told a joint airport news conference with Mr. Baker.

Diplomats said Saudi Arabia and most of its Gulf Arab allies were uncomfortable with the escalation of tension.

"Bush may have his own agenda that could tolerate or even welcome a new military adventure but the Gulf Arabs have different concerns," one diplomat said.

Diplomats said Arab states had supported U.S.-led action to liberate Kuwait but public support for a new strike against Iraq now would would be more difficult to obtain.

President Bush on Friday cancelled plans to be away from Washington this weekend to deal with the crisis in Iraq, the White House announced.

Spokesman Fitzwater told reporters Mr. Bush was to return to Washington late Friday after campaign appearances in Ohio and Missouri and would meet top National Security Advisers Saturday morning at the presidential retreat of Camp David, Maryland.

He had planned to spend the weekend at his vacation home in Kennebunkport, Maine.

Mr. Bush met with top National Security advisers on Thursday to discuss the standoff.

His administration contends the current U.N. resolution that authorised using force to expel Iraq from Kuwait last year provides adequate authority for further military action, spokesman Fitzwater told reporters.

He said Iraq must permit nuclear inspections by U.N. teams that it agreed to at the conclusion of the Gulf war.

Mr. Bush mulled the Iraq situation against a politically charged landscape with his election-year popularity at an all-time low.

Thef war against Iraq last year propelled Mr. Bush's ratings to 90 per cent approval. But the Iraqi government's staying power after the war gave Mr. Bush's critics fodder.

Mr. Fitzwater said the Iraq situation was the subject of a luncheon session at the White House with Mr. Bush, Defence Secretary Dick Cheney, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Colin Powell and other national security advisers.

The current president of the U.N. Security Council, Jose Luis Jesus of Cape Verde, said Thursday that Iraq had been offered a compromise plan under which inspectors would enter the agriculture ministry in smalll groups. The groups would determine what is in the ministry and whether a full inspection team should go in. Iraq did not immediately respond.

Asked about the prospect of an air strike against Iraq, Mr. Fitzwater said, "I won't comment on military decisions but all options remain open."

In Istanbul, Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel said on Friday that Turkey would not let its airbases be used for a Western strike on Iraq.

"The use of Turkish airbases and installations against Baghdad is out of the question," Mr. Demirel told an Istanbul news conference. He said the Western allies had not asked to use the southern Incirlik airbase for a possible military operation.

"It is important that Iraq aims for reconcilation with the United Nations and not confrontation," Mr. Demirel said.

He made clear that NATO-member Turkey would abide by all U.N. decisions, including a possible ultimatum against Iraq, to force compliance with the Gulf war ceasefire terms.

"We will act in line with the United Nations Security Council," Mr. Demirel said in reply to a question." In the past we participated in all actions under the U.N. umbrella. We have to act in concert with the U.N. for... world peace and order."

During the Gulf war, Turkey allowed Incirlik and other bases to be used for Western air raids on northern Iraq.

Mr. Demirel has often said that Turkey, once a big trade partner of Iraq, must help Baghdad "reintegrate with the world." This month the government decided to appoint a charge d'affaires to the Iraqi capital for the first time since the war.

Arabs discuss Rabin proposals

(Continued from page 1)

strategic goals of every party involved in the Middl East peace process.

Dr. Abu Jaber voiced hope that many issues would become clear during the next round of bilateral talks between Arab and Israeli negotiators in light of the proposals of the Israeli Labour Party and the ideas of the new Israeli prime minister.

The Jordanian delegation to the meetings includes head of the Jordanian delegation to the Arab-Israeli talks Abdul Salam Al Majali, general coordinator to multilateral talks Fayez Al Tarawneh, Jordan's ambassador to Syria Nayef Al Hadid, and Director of the Foreign Minister's office Abdullah Al Khatib.

Bye-elections

(Continued from page 1)

istered. Analysts have said that apathy was greatest among non-committed electorate.

Based on 1989 election results, the bloc voting force of the Brotherhood has been estimated at 4,200 in the Fourth district and a maximum of 6,400 in the Madaba district.

While in 1989 Madaba was swept by the three Islamist-backed candidates, the Fourth District was divided. Mr. Hadid, a tribal leader, was more popular than the second successful candidate, the Brotherhood's Hamzeh Mansour, by some 2000 votes.

"It will be interesting to see if we have a few candidates nominated by political parties or coalitions of parties or if we have a repeat of the last elections where inter-tribal feuding and a swamp of candidates will again be defeated by the disciplined and organised brotherhood," commented the political observer.

Baker

(Continued from page 1)

for the visit, saying it would be an insult to their national dignity if they would not meet Mr. Baker in their own country.

Privately, U.S. officials said the visit could also prompt Mr. Baker to pursue with Congress the possibility of granting new military aid to Lebanon despite doubts over the government's ability to maintain its security without Syrian help.

Mr. Baker's trip throught the Bekaa Valley, a hotbed of pro-Iranian fundamentalist militants, was a closely-held secret until almost the last moment.

Lebanon

(Continued from page 1)

Baker on the first visit to Lebanon in nine years by a top U.S. official on Thursday pressed for both a Syrian redeployment and free general elections.

He said Syrian troops in Lebanon should soon redeploy under the terms of the Taif peace accord, which provided for political reforms followed two years later by a Syrian withdrawal to eastern Lebanon.

Mr. Baker said it was vital that the elections should be free of any hint of intimidation and coercion.

Syrian troops are supposed to pull out of Beirut and other areas and move to eastern Lebanon's Bekaa Valley in September in line with the 1989 Taif agreement to put a durable end to the civil war.

Talks venue

(Continued from page 1)

sador Alexander Zutov, during a visit of several hours on Thursday, delivered a message to "the political echelons" in Israel. The paper offered no details.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin took office this month vowing to speed up U.S.- and Russian-backed peace talks on ending the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Rabin government has gone some way towards meeting Arab demands by announcing that it would stop building new Jewish settlements in the occupied Arab territories.

Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer told a news conference on Thursday that he and Finance Minister Abraham Shohat would not sanction the construction of over 6,000 new housing units for Israelis in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

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Yugoslavs are in; IOC seeks worldwide Olympic truce

BARCELONA (AP) — The International Olympic Committee (IOC) assured that athletes from all six republics of the former Yugoslav Federation may compete in Barcelona, though not under the same conditions.

The IOC also appealed for warring factions in the Balkan country and all areas of tension to observe an "Olympic truce" during the Barcelona Games.

It recalled the signing of a truce in 884 B.C. under which Olympia was declared a sacred site symbolising peace.

"It is this fine tradition which should be revived in a world where conflicts of all kinds threaten humanity at large, and young people in particular," the IOC said in a statement released at the end of its three-day session.

"Faced with this situation, we must react in our own way. This appeal, merely by its existence, will help to combat 'the war in the minds of men."

The appeal was directed to "all the current areas of tension, particularly in Central Europe." That was a clear reference to the fighting in the former Yugoslav Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The U.N. Security Council imposed sanctions on May 30 against Yugoslavia, a former six-republic federation now reduced to Serbia and Montenegro. The sanctions, meant to punish Serbia for its alleged aggression in Bosnia, included a ban on athletes representing Yugoslavia.

The IOC agreed to allow Yugoslavs to compete in individual events only, while barring them from team events and the opening and closing ceremonies.

It dropped plans to refer to the Yugoslavs as the "independent team." The statement said they would be called "independent athletes."

Despite disappointment over the restrictions, the statement said "we consider this solution as a victory."

The IOC also cleared the way for participation of athletes from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia. The former Republics of Croatia and Slovenia recognised earlier this year and will compete independently.

Bosnia-herzegovina was granted provisional IOC recognition and allowed to compete under its own flag like any other independent country.

Ten athletes from Bosnia were planning to leave Friday from Sarajevo. U.N. spokesman Mik Magunsson in Sarajevo said U.N. forces would provide an escort to the airport for the Bosnian athletes.

"We're not counting on winning medals. What is important is that the world will see our flag and emblem for the first time," said Stjepan Klujic, head of the Bosnian Olympic Committee.

Athletes from Macedonia, which has not yet received international recognition as an independent state, will wear white uniforms and compete under the Olympic flag and anthem. They won't take part in the opening ceremony.

The Yugoslavs and Macedonians will be the first competitors in Olympic history banned from the opening and closing parades.

The status of Yugoslavia's table tennis, rowing and relay squads remained unclear.

"The United Nations gave a list of activities in which the athletes may participate," the statement said adding the IOC must consult with the Spanish government.

"We are quite confident we will find a resolution in the best interests of the athletes," he said.

Among teams that will miss the games is the men's water polo team that won a gold medal in the 1988 Olympics at Seoul. Also out are the women's basketball and men's and women's handball teams.

The Yugoslav teams will be replaced by the countries that finished directly behind them in the qualifying competitions Czechoslovakia in water polo, Italy in women's basketball, Norway in women's handball and Iceland in men's handball.

The Belgrade-based Tanjug News Agency said 50 athletes from Yugoslavia would head for Barcelona — 35 men and 15 women. That is less than half of the 118 who had planned to go before Yugoslav teams were banned.

Biggest, most costly Olympics about to begin

BARCELONA (AP) — When athletes from some 170 nations file through the packed, heat-shimmering Olympic stadium at the summer games' opening ceremony Saturday, they're to march in tight, close formation to save time.

In a small way, that instruction symbolises the most universal, event-laden games in history — wide open to new impulses after the cold war's end, and to new quandaries.

South Africa will be back after 32 years, this time with black athletes. Socialist holdout Cuba won't boycott, and new nations from Croatia to Namibia will participte proudly under their own flags.

On the flip side, Yugoslavia was barred from team sports under U.N. sanctios against Serbia. South Africans will compete without their national flag and anthem because blacks see them as symbols of white domination. And a world class Somalian runner is uncertain because of civil war at home.

But these are the first games free of political boycotts since 1972. Participation is at an all-time high: A record 257 medal sets in 25 sports are at stake among some 9,000 athletes.

International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Juan Antonio Samaranch pronounced himself happy on the eve of the games the IOC awarded to his home city in 1986.

"Now, we will say we will have universal games," he said.

Even palates are universal. Olympic caterers say athletes ask most often for — hamburgers and French fries.

The games may be more selective for animals than humans. Of 50 horses that coaches and athletes tested for jumping and temper, 17 failed to make the pool for the riding portion of the five-event modern pentathlon.

Saturday's opening celebrates youthful vigor and local ambience, as in one elaborate choreographed routine about a ship in the Mediterranean Sea.

Musical festiveness and Latin verve is provided by Spanish star tenors Placido Domingo, Jose Carreras and Jaime Aragall, soprano Montserrat Caballe, mezzo-soprano Teresa Berganza and baritone Juan Pons.

The first medals go out Sunday in cycling, shooting, swimming and weightlifting.

Sports kick off Friday when the United States takes on gold medal favourite Italy in soccer.

"I think without a doubt the Italians are the favourites to win the entire tournament," said U.S. coach Lothark Osiander. "They are a who's who of Italian soccer in the younger age groups."

A new gold medalist is guaranteed because the defending soccer champion, the Soviet Union, failed to qualify for the tournament, where the age limit is 23.

While ex-Soviet athletes join forces for the last time as the Unified Team, Germany stands to boost its medal tally after uniting with the former east German sports powerhouse.

The Soviet Union and east Germany finished one-two in the medal table in 1988. The unified team still is expected to grab many honours this time, especially in gymnastics.

While the games close the Yugoslavia's defending gold medal water polo team, it gains Cuba's boxers, hot medal favourite baseball team and athletes including high jump world record holder Javier Sotomayor.

Basketball's U.S. "dream team" of millionnaire professionals led by superstar Michael Jordan is expected to be a top attraction — and has confidence to spare, to put it mildly.

U.S. athletes are expected to dominate track and field's major events, headlined by a long jump duel between Carl Lewis and world record holder Mike Powell that could easily push the mark beyond 9 metres (29.5 feet). Michael Johnson is tipped to shatter Italian Pietro Mennea's world record of 19.72 seconds in the 200 metres.

In swimming, another prestige event, the United States, Australia and Hungary are expected to take home many medals.

Badminton — the other new sport besides baseball — is likely South East Asia's domain.

Hosting the event a city known for business dynamism, Mediterranean temperament and temperatures that keep young people out in streets or restaurants until the wee hours.

Spain spent some $8 billion to ready the port city for the Olympics.

Among Barcelona's pride is an improved road networ, the waterfront, palm-dotted Olympic Village, and the Montjuic Olymic Complex with its needle-shaped telecommunications tower.

All of Catalonia is using the capital's two weeks of attention to trumpet its national identity and language, suppressed from Madrid during the dictatorial rule of Gen. Francisco Franco.

It's also a celebration of Spain's return to democracy and its giant economic and social strides in the 1980s, highlighted by joining the European Community.

Superstitious athletes look for luck at the games

BARCELONA (R) — Battered boxing coach Ron Griffiths feels the full force of his light heavyweight Olympic hope's long-held superstition.

"I always hit Ron before I go into the ring," said Australian Rick Timperi, 25. "Sometimes he says 'ow why the hell do you do that?'. It worries him but I feel good."

"I don't like to change routine. If I've done somthing once and I come out winning I'll do it again."

Few athletes go so far as Timperi.

But every little helps when they're going for Olympic gold, be it a silent prayer on the starting blocks, a lucky charm or a favourite item of equipment that must always be there.

The South Koreans say dog-meat soup is the key to success.

Some of Iceland's athletes have brought spring water and lumps of volcanic rock from home for good luck.

"I don't think I've ever known a sportsman who's not superstitious," said Lloyd Agard, a member of the Trinidad and Tobago National Olympic Committee.

"Some don't even want the sheets changed on their beds because they say it'll bring bad luck."

Pamela Healy, a 470 class yachtswoman from San Francisco, swears by her pink baseball cap.

"My husband gave it to me about four years ago. He won a regatta wearing it and I won a World Championship in it in 1991 and the U.S. Olympic trials."

So is Healy all at sea if she forgets if for a race?.

"I've a back-up. My purple hat," she said.

For others, what counts is a prayer.

"I make the sign of the cross and I say to myself that the power of God can help me. I say Lord, thanks to you I can run well," said 400 metres athlete Martial Biguet, a Roman Catholic from the Central African Republic.

Mohammad Al-Malki might well have to face Biguet in the same event. He'll pray too.

"I believe in God and the Koran. That's all I need," said the 30-year-old Muslim.

Not all Olympians are superstitious.

"I believe in my muscles," said Latvian swimmer Arturs Jakovlevs.

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Becker shows his teeth before Olympics

BARCELONA (R) — The world's press photographers do not normally focus on the inside of a sport star's mouth — But Boris Becker is an exception to the rule for most things. The German tennis star, who often finds himself at the centre of controversy, arrived at the Barcelona Olympics late Thursday and promptly showed off the gold crown whose fitting at the dentist had delayed his arrival. The airport scene supplied a rare moment of humour from Becker, who has been causing trouble in German Olympic team ranks before even hitting a ball at the games. Becker's comments in a recent magazine interview that he was more interested in having coffee with other famous names than in winning medals upset German Olympic officials, who tend to take all their sports seriously. Sporting the German team T-shirt with the slogan "it's fairness that counts" Becker told reporters: "The comments were taken out of context. I want to enjoy the Olympics and the flair of the event. Of course I want to win the title."

Chaotic end mars Argentine Rally

TUCUMAN, Argentina (R) — Spectators angered by the cancelling of the last stage of the second leg of the Argentine Motor Rally have used rocks and flaming sticks to attack the cars of race leader Didier Auriol of France and former world champion Carlos Sainz of Spain. Organisers of the 1,890-km second leg short because fog had reduced visibility over the ice and mud covered course. Both drivers and their co-pilots escaped unscathed from the incident, which erupted when a mob suddenly spilled onto the road as the drivers were cruising slowly back to the city of Tucuman. The rocks hurled by spectators shattered the windscreens of Auriol's Lancia and Sainz's Toyota. The Italian car sustained further damage when a spectator rammed a fiery stick into the vehicle's roof airvent. Auriol had to drive on for two kilometres before he could stop to remove the stick. His co-pilot Bernard Occelli's seat was burnt by the torch.

Bobby Fischer is 'planning comeback'

BELGRADE (R) — Former world chess champion Bobby Fisher is planning to play his first public match in almost 20 years in Yugoslavia next month, a Yugoslav newspaper said. Politika said the 49-year-old American had agreed to play an exhibition match against Boris Spassky, the Russian grandmaster he defeated in Reykjavik in 1972 to become World champion. The Belgrade paper said Fischer had signed a $5.5 million contract with Serbian banker and hotel owner Jezdimir Vasiljevic. Fischer will play Spassky in the exclusive Yugoslav resort of Sveti Stefan on the Montenegrin coast and in Belgrade, the paper said, adding that Spassky would travel to the mediaeval resort on Aug. 10.

Klinsmann leaves Inter for Monaco

PARIS — Star striker Jurgen Klinsmann, an architect of Germany's World Cup victory in 1990, will leave Inter Milan and Italian soccer this season for AS Monaco and the French League, team officials announced Thursday. Under a three-year contract, Klinsmann replaces Liberian George Weah in the Monaco line-up. Weah will go to Paris Saint-Germain for four years, Paris SG Vice President Michel Denisot and AS Monaco President Jean-Louis Campora said at a news conference. No financial details of the transaction were disclosed. The two French clubs and Ernesto Pellegrini, head of Inter had been involved in negotiations since Monday. Klinsmann, 27, was a star at Inter since leaving VFB Stuttgart in 1989. He has been selected for Germany's national squad 41 times.

Marseille agree Steven move to Leeds

MARSEILLE, France (R) — French League champions Marseille have agreed on the sale of England midfielder Trevor Steven to Leeds United, Marseille said. Club Vice-President Jean-Louis Levreau did not give details of the deal, but said Steven still had to sort out a disagreement with Leeds over his pay terms. "It's now up to the player to make a deal with the English management. There is a salary problem at the moment and the management and Trevor Steven still haven't agreed on it," Levreau said. Steven, 28, moved to Marseille in August last year from Glasgow Rangers for 47 million francs ($9 million).

Lendl outplays McEnroe in Toronto

TORONTO (AP) — Third-seeded Ivan Lendl breezed past John McEnroe 6-2, 6-4 to advance to the Player's International Championships semifinals. McEnroe, who has dropped his last six straight matches to Lendl, plans to cut back on his playing commitments next year. "The weeks I do choose to play I'll have a tendency to go places I haven't been to before" said McEnroe, who has played in this tournament the past 16 years. "(Chances of returning) are very, very miniscule." McEnroe entered the quarterfinal on a roll, having dropped just four games in two matches. However, Lendl, ranked 12th in the world, played a nearly perfect game and the American struggled to keep serve.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY JULY 25, 1992

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Making new contacts today will prove to be more of a challenge than it is worth. In travel you gain a new perspective and benefit especially when you get together with influential persons.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) This is a day to make yourself conform to accept rules and regulations especially while in the world of outside action and don't be impulsive in anyway.

TAURUS: (April 20 To May 20) You think a jaunt to some site where you can get a desired aim will work out allright but conditions there are not as you anticipated so postpone.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You think you can get your attachment to go along with a plan that has not been well thought out by you yet, so finish studies before asking support.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You can mistake the intentions of a partner who is actually being very impersonal about a situation that means much to you personally.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) A day to consider the many tasks facing you and to do them in a proven manner without getting into new phases that momentarily look appealing.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You think now the right entertainment in which to engage in today but unless you are careful you will find yourself over your head financially.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Your home seems to be in good shape and your family in right humor but any spark of contention could start a blaze that could cause unwise dispute.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Look for some messages or communications that have some risk or gamble connected with your reply and if you do acknowledge make it very tactful.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You think you know what to do about a financial matter now but unless you take your time and get all facts and figures you can make a mistake.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You start the day feeling fine and in a positive frame of mind but you soon have some doubts and fears, rightly as to the course of action to pursue.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Whatever you have in mind of a confidential nature needs to be kept just that for if you tell others you find it gets out and to your disadvantage.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You can make the wrong selection today in the friend or acquaintance you ask to aid you with some project that is vital to your future well-being.

THE BETTER HALF® By Harris



"Aluminum siding! I think you're overreacting to that gray hair you found."

JUMBLE® THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DAMMA

PEXLE

NEBATE

FRODIL



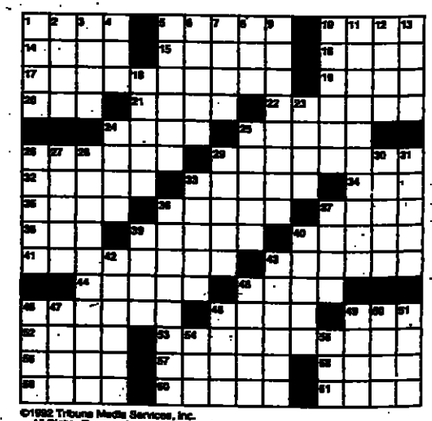
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: A "_____"

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: UTTER CLEFT BEFORE RENEGE
Answer: As he approached the racetrack, he saw this sign—"TURN FOR THE 'BETTOR'"

THE Daily Crossword by James Barrick



ACROSS
1 She loved Narcissus
5 City on the Willamette
10 Genesis name
14 Oddball
15 Old Gr. coins
16 Govern
17 Chubby one
19 "— girl"
20 Primate
21 Unclean, in Jewish law
22 Held out
24 Word at sea
25 Venom
26 Semitic language
29 Dancers' garments
32 Peer
33 Inverts
34 Bumped into
35 Golf stroke
36 Pursue relentlessly
37 Occupation
38 — for tat
39 Drench
40 Throb
41 Opening in a lens
43 — spaniel
44 Sunday dinner fare
45 Promising
48 Obtain
48 Except
49 — poetica
52 Extinct ox
53 Flattened
56 Calumet
57 Willow rod
58 Art movement
59 Meeting: abbr.
60 Playgrounds
61 Sign

DOWN
1 Isle of exile
2 — de grace
3 Table d'—
4 Neighbor of Erie: abbr.
5 Woe
6 Religious house
7 Do nothing
8 Bend in a pipe
9 Artificial lake
10 Bristlelike structure
11 Dairy product
12 Otherwise
13 Bein' from
18 A Barrymore
23 Islands
24 Smell — (be leery)
25 Fishing net
26 Seven: pref.
27 Pit out
28 Flowers
29 Low-down guy
30 Dimwitted
31 Guide
33 Woo
36 Domestic employee
37 "I love —"
39 Get top billing
40 Stumper
42 Stirs
43 Blankets
45 Appraised
46 Has a meal
47 Toledo's waterfront
48 Recipe direction
49 "— Bede"
50 Coarse
51 Bridge
54 "Born in the —"
55 Tokyo, formerly

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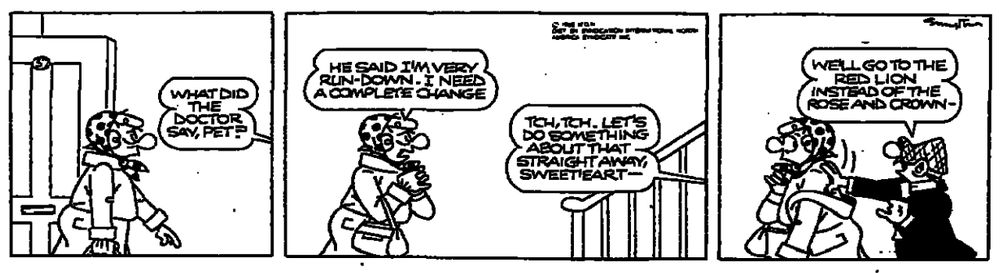
Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

T	A	T	E		D	E	L	T	A		C	A	P	T				
S	U	R	F		E	X	E	R	T		I	D	E	A				
A	R	E	T		F	A	M	I	L	Y	T	R	E	E				
			R	I	T	E		T	I	C	S		A	E	R	I	A	L
			O	R	A	N	T		A	R	T	I						
O	M	E	G	A		F	I	L	E		V	A	T	I	C	A	N	
M	I	L	N	E		B	O	R	I	S		P	A	R				
A	C	I	D		G	A	T	O	S		A	P	I	E				
R	E	F		B	O	W	E	T		W	I	L	A	N				
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		E	G	G	S		B	E	N	E	F	I	T					
S	C	A	R	C	E		A	L	S	O		R	A	N				
T	R	E	E	N	D	O	U	S	E	S		P	E	S	O			
O	A	R	S		U	X	A	S	E		R	E	A	L				
A	N	O	Y		S	E	N	S	E		E	S	P	Y				

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH HIRSCH

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A FINE DEFENSE

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ A Q 10 7 4 3 2
♡ Q 9
◇ K 7 5
♣ 4

WEST
♠ 6 5
♡ J 3 2
◇ A J 6 4 3
♣ K 10 2

EAST
♠ K J 9 8
♡ 7 6
◇ Q 10 9 2
♣ A 5 3

SOUTH
♠ Void
♡ A K 10 8 5 4
◇ 8
♣ Q J 9 8 7 6

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♡	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♣	Pass	2 ◇	Pass
3 ♣	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	4 ♡	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Opening lead: Ace of ◇

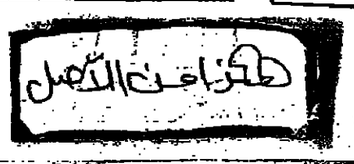
Winning defense requires partnership cooperation. If the partners are on different wavelengths, it is all too easy for one to undo the good work of the other. On this deal from a recent Southwest regional championship, East and West combined perfectly to sink a contract that was made more often than not.

North's bid of two diamonds, the fourth suit, created a game-forcing auction. South described a mammoth two-suiter, and the auction died at four hearts—most of North's cards were not working.

West, Ed White of Houston, Texas, got the defense off to its best start by leading the ace of diamonds, then shifting to a trump to cut down dummy's ruffing power. The table's nine won the trick and a low club was led off the board. East, Eddie Wold, also of Houston, continued the good work by refusing to go up with the ace.

In with the king of clubs, West led another trump. Declarer could take two club discards on the ace of spades and king of diamonds, but still had to concede two club tricks for down one.

The defenders had to play exactly as they did to prevail. If West does not lead the ace of diamonds, declarer can discard the singleton diamond on the ace of spades. If West does not shift to a trump, declarer will be able to ruff a club in dummy and lose only two clubs and a diamond. And if East rises with the ace of clubs, the defenders will again get only two club tricks.



هذا هو الأصل

Financial Markets

Jordan Times in cooperation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	NEWYORK CLOSE Date 22/7	TOKYO CLOSE Date 23/7
Sterling Pound*	1.9065	1.9045
Deutsche Mark	1.4853	1.4870
Swiss Franc	1.3169	1.3175
French Franc	5.0120	5.0235**
Japanese Yen	126.69	126.40
European Currency Unit	1.3710	1.3695**]

* U.S. Dollar per unit
** European Opening @ 9:00 a.m. GMT

Eurocurrency Interest Rates Date: 23/7/92

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.31	3.43	3.56	3.87
Sterling Pound	9.93	10.06	10.12	10.12
Deutsche Mark	9.62	9.68	9.62	9.68
Swiss Franc	9.68	8.75	8.75	8.68
French Franc	10.06	10.18	10.18	10.18
Japanese Yen	4.46	4.28	4.06	4.03
European Currency Unit	10.93	10.93	10.93	10.75

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. $1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals Date: 23/7/92

Metal	US$/Oz	JD/Gm*	Metal	US$/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	359.60	6.60	Silver	5.99	.090

* JD Equal

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.668	0.670
Sterling Pound	1.2717	1.2781
Deutsche Mark	0.4492	0.4514
Swiss Franc	0.507	0.5090
French Franc	0.1330	0.1337
Japanese Yen*	0.5279	0.5305
Dutch Guilder	0.3983	0.4003
Swedish Krona	0.1235	0.1241
Italian Lira*	0.0592	0.0595
Belgian Franc	0.02175	0.02186

* Per 100

Other Currencies Date: 23/7/92

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7450	1.7550
Lebanese Lira*	0.03385	0.04000
Saudi Riyal	0.1777	0.1810
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2500	2.3400
Qatari Riyal	0.1812	0.1822
Egyptian Pound	0.200	0.2160
Omani Riyal	1.7100	1.7250
UAE Dirham	0.1812	0.1822
Greek Drachma*	0.3650	0.3850
Cyprist Pound	1.5365	1.5565

* Per 100

SAB Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	21/7/92 Close	22/7/92 Close
All-Share	140.82	140.86
Banking Sector	103.52	103.71
Insurance Sector	150.53	150.11
Industry Sector	192.93	192.90
Services Sector	178.66	178.17

December 31, 1990 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.

One Sterling	1.9143/50	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.1913/18	Canadian dollar
	1.4850/60	Deutschemarks
	1.6772/82	Dutch guilders
	1.3180/90	Swiss francs
	30.58/62	Belgian francs
	5.0291/96	French francs
	1129/1131	Italian lire
	127.17/22	Japanese yen
	5.4030/80	Swedish crowns
	5.8475/8525	Norwegian crowns
	5.7300/50	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	$358.05/358.55	

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

BOURSE BANK CENTRE AMMAN - JORDAN
TELEPHONE: 660176 / 663170

ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (15/07/1992 - 22/07/1992)

WEEKLY REPORT

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	4,903	2.800	2.800	2.750
JORDAN KUWAIT BANK	22,686	1.878	1.868	1.870
THE HOUSING BANK	6,635	2.500	2.460	2.500
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	3,000	2.000	2.000	2.000
UNION BANK FOR SAVING & INVESTMENT	9,788	2.170	2.230	2.250
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	2,859	2.920	2.859	2.780
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	17,260	3.110	3.120	3.150
ARAB BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	104,681	1.160	1.150	1.150
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	10,957	1.090	1.090	1.080
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	282,658	3.050	3.020	3.150
BUSINESS BANK	15,795	2.100	2.100	2.100
REAL ESTATE SAVINGS/INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	673,953	2.860	2.860	3.120
BANK OF JORDAN	88,664	14.250	14.310	14.250
ARAB BANK	176,610	117.250	116.250	116.250
AL-NISR AL-ARABI INSURANCE	528	3.020	3.000	3.000
JERUSALEM INSURANCE	21,099	2.880	2.900	2.840
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	4,925	2.500	2.470	2.450
HOLY LAND INSURANCE	26,688	2.800	2.850	2.900
YARMOUK INSURANCE & REINSURANCE	11,263	2.600	2.650	2.650
ARABIAN SEAS INSURANCE	725	1.430	1.450	1.450
ARAB LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE	11,500	2.300	2.300	2.300
PHILADELPHIA INSURANCE	38,000	3.950	3.800	3.800
THE NATIONAL AHLIA INSURANCE	9,010	2.000	2.020	2.000
JORDAN HOTEL & TOURISM	4,725	3.150	3.150	3.150
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	20,401	1.240	1.250	1.260
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	50,027	4.060	4.020	4.010
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	124,494	1.340	1.340	1.330
IRBID DISTRICT ELECTRICITY	2,760	0.650	0.680	0.700
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	7,606	2.400	2.400	2.350
JORDAN PRESS FOUNDATION / ALRAI	3,108	6.040	6.200	6.200
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & CONSODORE HOTELS	815,810	1.560	1.560	1.600
JORDAN MEDICAL CORPORATION	1,699	0.280	0.280	0.270
MACHINERY EQUIP. RENTING & MAINTENANCE	4,005	1.010	1.000	1.010
PETRA ENTERPRISES & EQUIPMENTS LEASING	13,376	0.960	0.950	0.950
JORDAN GULF REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	118,407	0.700	0.700	0.720
JORDAN KUWAIT CO. FOR AGRI. & FOOD PROD.	7,925	1.180	1.130	1.120
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	27,637	1.510	1.500	1.500
JORDAN DAIRY	12,153	2.460	2.480	2.480
THE PUBLIC MINING	1,576	2.350	2.370	2.400
ARAB ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY	316,231	7.800	7.800	7.790
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	164,915	9.780	9.760	9.550
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	189,602	5.800	5.800	5.880
ARAB CHEMICAL DETERGENTS INDUSTRIES	77,091	21.000	20.900	22.100
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY	331,432	4.580	4.550	4.640
DAR AL DAWA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	73,923	6.650	6.650	6.700
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	69,120	3.750	3.750	3.670
THE JORDAN WORSTED MILLS	2,340	6.600	6.600	6.900
JORDAN CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	37,716	4.570	4.700	4.740
JORDAN GLASS INDUSTRIES	14,318	0.780	0.770	0.770
JORDAN PAPER & CARD BOARD FACTORIES	5,200	5.100	5.200	5.200
JORDAN PHOSPHATE MINES	3,584	3.700	3.570	3.580
JORDAN TANNING	37,748	4.700	4.900	4.750
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	1,246,106	3.060	3.020	2.910
NATIONAL INDUSTRIES	27,146	0.580	0.560	0.590
JORDAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	21,300	4.200	4.180	4.160
UNIVERSAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	167,413	13.300	13.600	13.600
ALADDIN INDUSTRIES	14,688	3.800	3.800	3.800
RAFIA INDUSTRIES	40,160	3.810	3.630	3.250
WOOLEN INDUSTRIES	2,755	1.550	1.580	1.570
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MATCH/JINCO	2,570	1.140	1.140	1.150
SPINNING & WEAVING	24,290	3.090	3.110	3.100
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	194,184	6.730	6.720	6.650
JORDAN SULPHO-CHEMICALS	92,370	3.510	3.510	3.540
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	114,677	1.240	1.230	1.260
JORDAN ROCKWOOL INDUSTRIES	2,655	1.740	1.750	1.770
JORDAN PRECAST CONCRETE INDUSTRY	96,751	0.580	0.580	0.600
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	444,747	5.170	5.160	5.240
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	69,706	2.160	2.150	2.130
JORDAN TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	2,625	21.000	21.000	21.000
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	39,564	8.500	8.360	8.450
GRAND TOTAL	6,667,606			

NO. OF DAYS TRADED : 5
DAILY AVERAGE OF TRADING VOLUME : 1,333,521
DAILY AVERAGE OF TRADED SHARES : 509,826
DAILY AVERAGE OF CONTRACTS : 693

Paper exposes Saudi-U.S. links on oil issues

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States has long tried to influence global oil prices through its dealings with Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter, the Washington Post has said.

Citing State Department douements and government legal papers, the Post said the United States and Saudi Arabia have long cooperation on oil issues, despite claims by both sides to the contrary.

It said the State Department documents, obtained through the freedom of information act, show Washington "leaned" on the Saudis to lower prices when they were above $30 a barrel in 1984.

Two years later it expressed its concern to Riyadh when oil prices dipped to almost $10 a barrel.

Legal papers filed on behalf of the State Department last month indicate that the policy of cooperation on oil issues is still in place, the newspaper said.

But the papers do not show that the United States ever asked the Saudis to set a particular price for oil, the Post said.

Instead, they show that the U.S. approach has been to emphasise the negative consequences that an oil price move outside a certain range would have, it said.

Saudi Arabia, in turn, has sometimes informed Washington in advance of its moves at meetings of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, the newspaper said.

As the largest OPEC producer, Saudi Arabia wields a great deal of clout and is in a key position of influence world prices by adjusting its output levels.

Bonn likely to earn billions from German privatisations in 1990s

BONN (R) — The German government expects to raise billions of marks by selling off state-owned enterprises in the 1990s.

Airline Deutsche Lufthansa A.G. and Deutsche Bundespost Telekom, the telecommunications arm of the Federal Postal Service, are the largest companies on the government's list.

But both of these privatisations face long delays — Lufthansa because it is making heavy losses and Telekom because selling it would require an amendment to the constitution.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl's cabinet approved a finance ministry report recommending that the policy of privatisation begun in 1983, which has so far brought 10.5 billion marks ($7 billion) into state coffers, should continue.

The cabinet gave itself a pat on the back for Germany's postwar policy of leaving major enterprises in private hands instead of privatising them as Britain and France did.

"If you don't nationalise, you have less to privatise," the finance ministry said. "We had 30 years of a free and successful market economy with priority for the private sector behind us when other countries were starting to privatise."

The cabinet, which agreed last week to privatise German railways after 2002, agreed that the state should eventually sell all of its 52.95 per cent stake in Lufthansa.

"The current federal government holding can be reduced considerably. The goal remains the complete withdrawal of the federal government from the company," the finance ministry said.

It said the state should retain a blocking minority of 25.1 per cent until after completion of the European Community's (EC's) internal market because other EC countries still had major stakes in national airlines.

Lufthansa made a net loss of 426 million marks ($285 million) in 1991 and does not expect much improvement in 1992.

The government agreed that partial privatisation would be the best solution for Telekom to enable it to operate in increasingly liberalised world telecommunications markets.

"The circle of shareholders should be opened up in order to finance growth of Deutsche Bundespost Telekom and maintain and increase its competitiveness," the ministry said.

Postal Minister Christian Schwarz-Schilling estimated Telekom's market value at 70 to 80 billion marks ($47 to $54 billion) in May and suggested that 25 per cent could be sold off in a first stage of privatisation.

Other companies targeted for self-off include airports, port authorities, construction companies and the federal printing office. The government also plans to sell land owned by east and west German railways.

The finance ministry disputed monopoly commission estimates that privatisation could raise hundreds of billions of marks, saying this would only be the case if Germany's federal states and local authorities joined Bonn in its privatisation drive.

It said the federal government could raise tens of billions of marks in the coming years if privatisation included the partial sell-off of Telekom.

American Airlines parent announces $166m loss

NEW YORK (R) — AMR Corp, parent of American Airlines, has reported a $166 million second-quarter loss, results its chairman called "an enormous disappointment."

The company blamed the fare war that swept the U.S. airline industry earlier this year and rising fuel prices.

Chairman Robert Crandall said that while American had tried to bring order to fares with its four-tier pricing system, "our competitors have chosen to continue filing many different fares."

"Thus despite strong traffic growth in the second quarter, yield (the average price paid by passengers) declined by 3.6 per cent, a very unfortunate result," Mr. Crandall said.

The results included an after-tax charge of $109 million for anticipated losses from AMR's Confirm R.S. hotel and rental car reservation project, which the company said it has now suspended.

Australasian banking giant created by BNZ takeover

WELLINGTON (R) — An Australasian banking giant was created this week when National Australia Bank (NAB) announced its intention to take over state-controlled Bank of New Zealand (BNZ), the country's biggest bank.

The widely-expected announcement that NAB would buy BNZ for 1.48 billion New Zealand dollars ($814 million) will end the New Zealand government's involvement in banking and is a new twist in a five-year saga of controversy surrounding BNZ.

NAB, a star performer in Australia, will join Westpac and Australia and New Zealand Bank (ANZ) as Australia's big three banks, and means New Zealand's retail banking industry is to be, with one exception, entirely foreign-owned.

Industry analysts said the New Zealand government, which owned 58 per cent of BNZ, and merchant Bank Fay, Richwhite, which held 27 per cent, would be relieved that exhaustive negotiations had concluded. The remaining 15 per cent of BNZ is owned by the public.

NAB said several conditions were attached to the deal, including an eight-week "due diligence" study of BNZ's finances.

Saudis still cherish big used U.S. cars

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Wide-bodied old gas-guzzling cars are gone from America but not forgotten. Just look to the desert super highways of Saudi Arabia, where more and more people are tooling around in roomy, used U.S. cars.

Even in this wealthy kingdom, prices of new cars are rising more rapidly than the average Saudi's salary. More and more citizens are into used cars, and they like the old American models the best.

"The dream car for the middle-income Saudi is now the Chevrolet Caprice — before it went aerodynamic," — said Bakur Azher, director of Saudi Auto Trader magazine.

"It's perfect because most Saudis have big families and they need the room, the air-conditioning's good and the size and weight give the impression of safety," he pointed out.

Back to back, the used-car lots in Jeddah now take up almost a square mile. It's a long way from the 1970s when, at the peak of the oil boom, high-rolling Saudis changed their cars for new models every year, usually simply dumping old models.

Mahmoud Abu Zeid of Al Sultan for Cars, the kingdom's biggest used-car dealer, describes the Caprice as "the queen of the used car market in Saudi Arabia" — especially if it's loaded with options.

The new Caprice is not so popular, he said, adding that Saudis have dubbled that model "Lifebuoy" because they think it's shaped like a bar of soap.

The old cars come over from the United States in relatively good shape, compared to the wear and tear wrought by a harsh climate on a used car in Sandi Arabia, and their value is greater.

Also, Saudis aren't too worried about getting good gasoline mileage. In the world's largest oil-exporting country, gas is cheap and has gone cheaper since spring.

Leaded fuel is still the only kind of gasoline sold here, although there are plans to introduce unleaded by 1994 or 1995.

That means that the catalytic converters must be taken out of used American cars when they arrive. But even with these expensive changes, Saudis still consider them a good buy.

About 30,000 used cars, most of them American, came into Saudi Arabia last year, according to the Norwegian shipping company Hoegh-Ugland Auto Liners, which handles most U.S. car imports. That's about three times more than 1990.

With big profits to be made for the Saudi shipping home a couple of cars after graduation to the small-town entrepreneur in Hofuf and the big-time dealers who line Jeddah's Medina Road.

"If you're going to see your son at university in the United States, for sure you'll bring back a few cars," says Jamil Yasin of Asaf International, a used-car dealer who opened in the last year.

He said Saudis were making profits of up to $2,000 per Caprice — "and that more than pays for the vacation."

Britain still pushing London for proposed Euro-bank headquarters

LONDON (R) — Britain is lobbying hard in Europe for the proposed European Central Bank (ECB) to be based in London, senior government officials have said.

They dismissed as "mischievous" reports that Britain and France had a deal to drop their bids for the bank, provided it did not go to Frankfurt and was sited instead in an alternative financial centre such as Luxembourg.

A European Central Bank is a key element of the later stages of plans for economic and monetary union (EMU), intended to lead to a single EC currency by the late 1990s.

Hosting the ECB would be a major boost to the prestige of any European finance centre.

London financiers and the British government have waged a long battle to win the ECB and other institutions in order to reinforce London's status as Europe's pre-eminent finance centre.

The government officials said there would be no let up.

"We are still lobbying for London," one official said.

Explaining what they meant by saying reports of a deal were "mischievous," officials said some rivals for the ECB, particularly backers of Bonn, were promoting the idea that Britain and France had accepted they were not going to get it.

That line has it that Britain and France have agreed that the ECB will not go to London or Paris, provided Frankfurt — their key rival as a major European finance centre — also missed out.

Another view of the battle for the ECB suggests that it should go to Frankfurt to help ease Germans' fears that by agreeing to a single EC currency they are surrendering the security of the mark.

The British officials said one possibility still being assessed was to locate the political and management wing separately from its operational market-related arm.

Bank of England Governor Robin Leigh-Pemberton recently told a conference that London was the best location for the ECB, though it could survive as a finance centre without it.

"In my opinion, policy makers are likely to be better informed if they are located close to the main financial markets, and for that reason it would be in Europe's interest for its central bank to be located in London," he said in a speech to a Euromoney conference in London.

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Gorazde defenders call for help as Serbs pound Bosnian city

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina (AP) — A dwindling number of defenders of the town of Gorazde and thousands of Muslim refugees begged the world to save them as Serb forces pounded away at the Bosnian stronghold Thursday.

Sarajevo, the Bosnian capital, was the quietest it has been in days. But the casualties of sporadic fighting included Margaret Moth, a camerawoman for Atlanta-based Cable News Network, who was shot in the jaw and seriously wounded by a sniper. CNN Rome bureau chief Mark Dulmage suffered slight wounds.

Three people were reported killed and 20 wounded in a mortar attack on the Vogosca neighbourhood, the city ambulance service said. A French soldier was hurt when his armoured personnel carrier struck a mine, said a U.N. official.

Gorazde's appeal, the second in two days, was carried by the Bosnia News Agency (BH). It asked "all friends and people around the world" for help, and for food and medicine.

Bosnian officials said 20 people had been killed and 50 wounded in the Serb assault there in 24 hours, bringing the reported death toll in the past three days to 150.

Gorazde, the last Bosnian government stronghold in eastern Bosnia, took in thousands of refugees before Serbs surrounded it. The Belgrade-based Tanjug News Agency said Thursday was the 80th day of the siege of Gorazde.

The city's contacts with the outside world rest with ham radio operators while it endures day after day of shelling from Serb forces on surrounding hills.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees sent three trucks to Gorazde, about 50 kilometres south east of Sarajevo. The convoy, escorted by a U.N. armoured personnel carrier, carried some food but was intended mainly to find out whether it was possible to approach the town.

Tanjug reported that French U.N. troops reached Serbian positions on the outskirts of Gorazde, and would try to reach the town later in the day or Friday.

Gorazde appeared to have a similar psychological importance for the two sides as the city of Vukovar in the fighting in neighbouring Croatia. Vukovar's Croat defenders were besieged for months by Serb forces before the city fell in mid-November.

That capture cemented Serb control over eastern Croatia. Six weeks after its fall, a ceasefire went into effect in Croatia that has largely held for almost seven months.

Nationalist Serbs in Bosnia oppose the republic's independence. They have captured about two-thirds of Bosnia, primarily northern and eastern lands that adjoin Serbia, Montenegro, and Serb-held territory in eastern Croatia.

At least 7,500 people have died since Bosnia's Muslims and Croats voted on Feb. 29 for independence. Some Bosnian officials speak of more than 40,000 dead. About 1.3 million of Bosnia's prewar population of 4.3 million have fled the fighting.

In other developments:

— Bosnian government forces exchanged 29 Serbian prisoners for 72 loyalists, mostly Muslims, on the outskirts of Sarajevo. "I am very hungry, they barely fed us," said a 54-year-old Muslim, Masa Lepenica, who had been held for 20 days.

— In Serb-dominated Yugoslavia, President Slobodan Milosevic and the leader of his Socialist Party, Borisav Jovic, clashed over Mr. Milosevic's criticism of the party's bureaucracy. The dispute could signal a rift, or could be staged to make it appear that Mr. Milosevic, accused by the west of being largely responsible for the warfare in Bosnia, was distancing himself from the former Communists.

— A trainload of 1,000 Bosnian refugees arrived in Switzerland after being stuck on the Croatian-Slovenian border. Switzerland Monday said it would take in the refugees.

— A group of 3,800 mostly Muslim refugees from northern Bosnia were reported heading toward the Croatian city of Karlovac. Bringing the convoy through Serb-held territory in Croatia represented "the first time we were able to make a humanitarian corridor to bring people to safety," said U.N. official Peter Kessler.

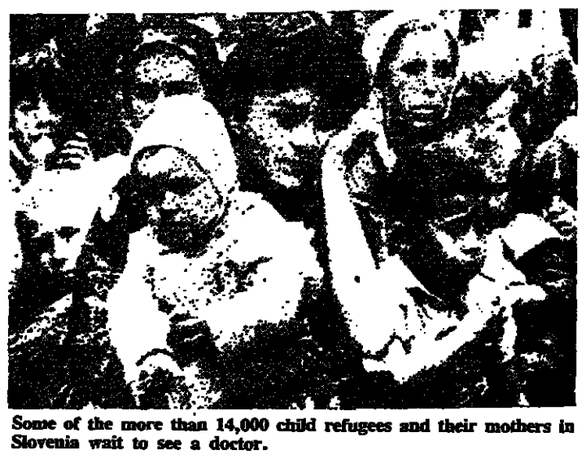
— While its parliament debated the military's role, Germany sent a second destroyer to the Adriatic to join NATO forces patrolling the coast of Yugoslavia. The opposition Social Democrats said the mission violated the constitution.

— In Washington, the Pentagon said the aircraft carrier USS Saratoga had cancelled a scheduled port call in Greece because of U.S. involvement in supporting the humanitarian supply mission to Bosnia. "U.S. military commanders felt it was the right thing to do to keep it at sea," Pentagon spokesman Pete Williams announced at a briefing.

The statement appeared aimed at stifling reports that the carrier's movements were related to a possible military strike against Iraq.

Meanwhile, the commander of Yugoslavia's Third Military District, which includes troubled Kosovo province, was killed Thursday in a helicopter crash, the army said.

Gen. Vladimir Vukovic, 54, died along with two army colonels, a sergeant and a mechanic when their helicopter crashed on Mount Brezovic in Kosovo, about 55 kilometres southwest of Pristina in southern Serbia.



Some of the more than 14,000 child refugees and their mothers in Slovenia wait to see a doctor.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

S. African strike seen fuelling unrest

JOHANNESBURG (R) — A general strike aimed at speeding democracy reforms could fuel black township violence and hamper peace efforts by U.N. special envoy Cyrus Vance, South African commentators said Friday. "Further political and industrial turbulence lie ahead... violence will be an ever-present danger," said an editorial in the Johannesburg Star. "A looming work stoppage next month could presage a period of quickened bitterness and conflict," said an editorial in Business Day. John Kane Berman, director of the independent South African Institute of Race Relations, said in an article in Business Day black pro-democracy campaigns were making some parts of the country ungovernable. "These strategies... have got out of control," he said. Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) and its Labour and Communist Party allies Thursday announced a general strike for Aug. 3-4, saying blacks would rise up in their millions to call for democracy.

Hitler remains destroyed after 1970

MOSCOW (AP) — The remains of Adolf Hitler, his wife Eva Braun, and other members of his inner circle were preserved until 1970 by a Soviet military counterintelligence unit, then destroyed, a news report said Friday. The teeth and dental work of the Nazi leader and his wife are still in Russian military archives in Moscow, historian Lev Bezymensky said in an interview with the newspaper Komsomolskaya Pravda. Hitler's remains were found on May 4, 1945, after the Nazi leader committed suicide on April 30 in his Berlin bunker, but they were preserved by the counterintelligence unit of the Soviet Third Army known as Smersh, he said. Smersh is a Russian acronym for "death to spies". Aides to Hitler reportedly had doused the corpses with gasoline and burned them after the suicides to prevent the bodies from falling into Soviet hands. The remains were buried and exhumed at least six times between 1945-46 as the army moved its location, Mr. Bezymensky was quoted as saying. The final stop in 1946 was Magdeburg, about 120 kilometres from Berlin in what was then east Germany, said Mr. Bezymensky, who was an interpreter for Marshal Georgy Zhukov, first deputy commander-in-chief. "The remains of the Nazi 'saints' were left there (in Magdeburg) for nearly 25 years and were destroyed in 1970," Mr. Bezymensky told the newspaper.

Court allows Imelda Marcos to leave

MANILA (R) — A Philippine judge Friday gave former first lady Imelda Marcos permission to travel to Hong Kong next week for her first trip abroad since her return from exile last November. But Judge Corona Somera ordered the widow of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos to post a 200,000-peso ($7,700) bond as a guarantee that she would come back, and to report to the court upon her return. Ms. Marcos said she planned to leave for the British colony on Tuesday to discuss with some associates a proposal for an out-of-court settlement of civil cases filed against her by the Philippine government.

Jordan Press Foundation الرأي Jordan Times المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية

Home delivery

The Jordan Times and its sister Arabic daily Al Ra'i are offering a new home delivery service to different parts of the capital, starting first with the areas of Shmeisani, Abdoun and Umm Utheina.

Those who are interested in having their newspapers delivered to their homes in the morning should contact the Distribution Department, Mr. Samih Abu Hanieh, Extn. 247, at the Jordan Press Foundation between 10:00 a.m., and 2:00 p.m. Full information including names, addresses and telephone numbers will be needed before the delivery service is provided.

Quayle is in hot water over abortion remarks

WASHINGTON (R) — Vice President Dan Quayle, known for making verbal gaffes, was in hot water again, this time with his wife as abortion activists for saying he would support his daughter if she became pregnant and chose to have an abortion.

Anti-abortion groups who see Mr. Quayle's Republican Party as their staunch ally with its call for a constitutional ban on abortion worried that he was harming their cause while pro-abortion forces accused him of hypocrisy.

His wife Marilyn simply contradicted him, saying the couple's daughter Corrine, who is 13, would not have an abortion in the event of pregnancy.

The flap coincided with renewed speculation that Mr. Quayle, who most Americans according to opinion polls consider unfit to be president, might be dropped from the party's ticket to help President George Bush's troubled reelection campaign.

"If I thought I was hurting the ticket I'd be gone," Mr. Quayle said Wednesday, insisting this was not the case.

The difference over abortion in the Quayle household and apparently with the Republican Party line was just the latest in a series of verbal faux pas that have peppered Mr. Quayle's term as vice president.

The most recent slip occurred on a Cable News Network chat show Wednesday when he said that if his daughter became pregnant and decided on an abortion," obviously, I would counsel her and talk to her and support her on whatever decision she'd make."

"I'd support my daughter. I'd hope that she wouldn't make that decision," he added, speaking of abortion.

Mr. Quayle's wife, Marilyn, speaking of the hypothetical abortion situation, said their daughter would "take the child to term."

She said on a Des Moines, Iowa, radio programme that she and the vice president would make the decision together with their daughter.

After hearing his wife's comments, Mr. Quayle appeared to soften his stance, telling reporters in Evansville, Indiana, that he "would encourage her to have the child and not to have the abortion. But I would support my daughter."

Republican National committee Chairman Rich Bond appeared to put some distance between the party and Mr. Quayle, saying the vice president's remarks were "his personal opinion."

Moscow: Honecker is leaving Russia

MOSCOW (AP) — Former east German leader Erich Honecker will leave Russia "in the nearest future," a Foreign Ministry spokesman said Friday.

"Honecker will leave Russia for sure," spokesman Sergei Yazstrezhembsky told a regular news briefing. He refused to give more details.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl said Thursday that his government's efforts to bring Mr. Honecker to Germany for trial may be nearing a successful conclusion.

Mr. Honecker, 79, is wanted by German authorities on manslaughter charges linked to shoot-to-kill orders he allegedly issued to east German border guards to prevent escapes to the west.

He sought refuge in the Chilean embassy in Moscow in December 1991, 10 months after being flown surreptitiously to the Soviet Union for unspecified medical treatment.

It remains unclear how or when Mr. Honecker would leave Moscow and what the German government's immediate plans for him are.

In Madrid, Chilean Foreign Minister Enrique Silva confirmed Friday that "a solution is near" in the Honecker case and that it "necessarily includes" the handing of Mr. Honecker to German authorities for trial.

Commanders to stop Black Sea Fleet desertions

KIEV (R) — For two days the mutiny of a tiny coastal vessel tested the nerve of Russian and Ukrainian naval commanders. Warnings of conflict sounded from both sides.

However, stepping back from the brink once more, Commonwealth and Ukrainian naval officials agreed late Thursday to stop any, spread of the mutiny and avoid a chaotic disintegration of the Black Sea Fleet.

The rebel ship, a small escort vessle, raised the Ukrainian flag and fled its Commonwealth-commanded base in Donuzlav Tuesday without orders from the Moscow-backed fleet command. It steamed under pursuit to the Ukrainian port of Odessa.

Local journalists said officials of both sides agreed after emergency talks in the Black Sea base port of Sevastopol late Thursday to set up a joint commission to prevent a repetition of the incident.

"But the situation has grown more complex," Ukrainian delegation chief Vasily Durdinets told a news conference.

The two-day wrangle over the vessel stirred anger among both Russian and Ukrainian seamen.

Black Sea Fleet Commander Igor Kasatonov and Ukrainian Navy Commander Boris Kozhin described the desertion as a vilation of an agreement last month between Russia and Ukraine.

The agreement allowed for preservation of a united Commonwealth-controlled fleet during talks on its divison.

Ukrainian military leaders said they could not condone the action, but insisted the Ukrainian sailors had been provoked by Commonwealth commanders. The fate of the ship and its crew was not decided at the talks.

While the dispute grew, the danger increased that Russian-manned ships would retaliate by raising the pre-revolutionary St Andrew ensign to stake their claim.

The dispute over sharing out the fleet has overshadowed relations between the two Slav giants of the Commonwealth since its formation last December on ruins of the Soviet Union.

Both sides have repeatedly said a solution is in sight but talks have dragged on for months without result.

Ukrainian Defence Minister Konstantin Morozov said Wednesday Kiev insisted on complete control of the fleet's valuable Ukrainian bases.

But remaining Russian bases on the Black Sea would not be able to accommodate a large naval force.

Meanwhile, two people were killed overnight in fresh clashes between Moldovan government forces and Slav rebels, reports from the secessionist Dnestr region said Friday.

The government and the separatists signed a ceasefire 10 days ago but since then around 50 people have been killed in an almost ceaseless series of clashes.

The Moldovan Interior Ministry said one person was killed and eight were wounded when the rebels shelled police positions near the Dnestr towns of Dubossary and Bendery.

A spokesman for the Dnestr side blamed the government for breaking the truce, saying one of its troops was killed and several were wounded when Moldovan police attacked Bendery.

Hundreds of people have been killed since March in fierce fighting between the two sides.

Colombia sacks staff at jail that Escobar fled

BOGOTA, Colombia (R) — The Colombian government, embarrassed by the jail-break of drug lord Pablo Escobar, sacked the prison director and suspended all the guards, local news reports said.

A Colombian radio station said it had received a taped statement from Mr. Escobar, boss of the powerful Medellin cocaine cartel, in which he said he was prepared to return to the original jail if United Nations forces guarded the prison.

Government sources said they could not confirm whether the tape was from Escobar and it was impossible to know whether it was authentic.

Mr. Escobar, one of the world's most dangerous criminals, escaped from a prison near Medellin with nine of his lieutenants Wednesday during an uprising against government plans to move them to a military base.

He escaped just 13 months after giving himself up in exchange for President Cesar Gaviria's offer of leniency and immunity from extradition to the United States.

Hundreds of soldiers scoured the area around the prison for the fugitives but without success, government sources said. Mr. Escobar's whereabouts were a mystery.

Mr. Escobar's escape deeply embarrassed the government and undermined the credibility of its policies for dealing with the country's powerful cocaine traffickers.

Criticism of the government mounted and hardline former Justice Minister Enrique Parejo said Mr. Gaviria should resign. In the United States, President George Bush's anti-drugs chief, Bob Martinez, urged Colombia to take every necessary step to recapture Mr. Escobar.

In Washington, Mr. Martinez issued a statement saying: "I am appalled that (he) is once again on the loose, free to supervise one of the most vicious criminal organisations the world has ever seen."

Police accuse Mr. Escobar of ordering the murder of three presidential candidates and of hundreds of policemen and judges during a drug war which swept the country in 1989 and 1990.

The Justice Ministry fired the director and deputy director of Mr. Escobar's prison and suspended all the prison's guards pending an investigation into Wednesday's events, the Colombian News Agency Colprensa reported.

The private Caracol Radio station said it received a taped statement from Mr. Escobar in which he said that he or his colleagues would not "carry out violent actions of any kind for the moment."

"We are prepared to continue with the peace process and the process of submission to justice if we receive official guarantees we will stay in the Envigado Prison and that visits and the outside of the prison will be controlled by special forces of the United Nations," it quoted him as saying in a message from "jungle region of Colombia."

But government sources said they could not confirm the authenticity of the tape.

The traffickers have said Envigado Prison is the only one which meets their security concerns and that the government's bid to transfer them violated an earlier agreement.

Colombian radio stations earlier broadcast conflicting statements from purported spokesmen for the Medellin cartel.

One caller said that Mr. Escobar had walked out of the front door of the prison, paying guards a $1.4 million bribe, and that the Medellin cartel would retaliate against senior officials.

However, Mr. Escobar's nephew, Nicolas Escobar, said Mr. Escobar had told him there would be no violence and that he was prepared to go on with the judicial process if he was given full guarantees.

Police chief insulted at Italian judge's funeral

PALERMO (R) — Angry protesters hurled insults at Italy's police chief Friday as thousands of Sicilians mourned leading anti-mafia Judge Paolo Borsellino, blown up by a car bomb with five bodyguards.

Police investigating Sunday's killings said they had arrested a private security guard and charged him with aiding crime.

The suspect was alleged to have refused to testify although he was present when the bomb went off.

Protesters at Judge Borsellino's funeral service, jeering and whistling at Police Commissioner Vincenzo Parisi, shouted "Parisi buffoon" as he followed the hearse.

Mr. Parisi had been the target of protests at Tuesday's funeral of the five bodyguards in Palermo cathedral, when he was jostled by demonstrators believed to include police bodyguards.

Friday's protest was brief. Some 8,000 people massed outside the church where the funeral service was held. Most disregarded a plea by Judge Borsellino's widow Agnese for a quiet ceremony.

The widow had refused a state funeral for Borsellino but had invited President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, Justice Minister Claudio Martelli and Mr. Parisi to the private rites.

The name of the arrested man was not released. It was the first arrest since the bombing and signalled a crackdown by authorities on a widespread fear of mafia reprisals which often seals the lips of witnesses.

The rigid "omerta," or law of silence, has almost invariably guaranteed impunity for the mafia in the past because a lack of witnesses scuppered inquiries into its crimes.

The crowd of mourners broke into applause which lasted several minutes as the coffin of Judge Borsellino, draped with his red magistrate's cloak, was carried out of the church.

Mr. Scalfaro, respected as a fiercely moral politican, prayed for political leaders not to betray the expectations of Italians.

He prayed "so that we who incarnate responsibility never be reasons for shame or scandal in the face of good, honest and clean people who love work, ask for peace, (and) know how to love and not how to hate."

Retired Magistrate Antonio Caponnetto, the mentor of both Judge Borsellino and his senior colleague Giovanni Falcone, who was blown in another bomb attack up on May 23, told mourners:

"Of the thousands of messages which came in, there was one with a single lily which said: 'A single flower for a man alone.'"

"But how can you (Borsellino) be alone if the heart of all Palermo beats for you? said Judge Caponetto, who was applauded for almost a minute by the crowd following the service relayed to the street through loudspeakers.

AIDS experts plan probe of possible new virus

AMSTERDAM (AP) — AIDS experts from around the world will gather soon to try to get to the bottom of a medical mystery: Is a new virus causing AIDS?

An outbreak of an AIDS-like illness in people who show no signs of the AIDS virus has been the No. 1 topic at this week's Eighth International Conference on AIDS.

Dr. James Curran, head of AIDS work at the U.S. Centres for Disease Control (CDC), at first downplayed the importance of the unexplainable cases. But as more and more came to light, Dr. Curran called it "an extremely important priority."

A report by a California doctor that he had found a virus that might be causing the mystery illness triggered even more concern.

And on Thursday, the chief of AIDS Control at the World Health Organisation (WHO) said he would bring together the best minds in AIDS in a few weeks to try to figure out what is going on.

"We need to get a handle on how big this problem — if it is a problem — really is," said Dr. Michael Merson of the United States.

So far, all researchers know for sure is that two or three dozen people around the world have had moderate or severe depression of their immune systems.

The condition mimics AIDS: Some victims have died of overwhelming infections, while others have strikingly low levels of protective white blood cells called T cells.

Yet none is infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

Among the questions experts say need to be answered:

— Is this a form of AIDS? Or is it a rare but overlooked illness that has always been around?

— Is the newly discovered virus really new? Or is it something else, perhaps an animal virus that once in a while infects people?

— If the virus truly is a newly recognised human microbe, is it causing the AIDS-like illness?

— And if it causes the disease, how does it spread?

Even if a virus has been discovered that causes an AIDS-like illness, it may still be so rare that it is not a significant health worry.

"We may be picking up the background that's always been there," said Dr. June Osborn, head of the U.S. National Commission on AIDS.

Despite their early reluctance to take the issue seriously, U.S. health authorities now say investigating the mystery outbreak and the possible virus behind it are one of their top priorities.

"We believe it is essential to do this urgently and get it done rapidly," said Dr. Curran.

On Wednesday, the U.S. journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences released a pending article by Dr. Sudhir Gupta of the University of California, Irvine. It announced the discovery of an apparently new virus in a woman suffering from the AIDS-like condition.

Dr. Gupta said he had also found the virus in the woman's healthy daughter, as well as eight other people.

While healthy officials at the AIDS conference took Dr. Gupta's report seriously, several said much more work is necessary to figure out what, if any, role his virus plays in disease.

"There should be healthy skepticism," said Dr. Anthony Fauci, head of AIDS research at the U.S. National Institutes of Health. "But we will very aggressively pursue instances in which there are cases of AIDS-like illness in people who do not have HIV."

Dr. David Ho of the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Centre in New York City said he also had seen evidence of a virus in people with AIDS-like conditions. Whether his virus was the same as Dr. Gupta's was uncertain, but he said it clearly is not HIV.

He said tests are under way to isolate it.

"We have all been working furiously for several weeks now," said Dr. Ho. "It shouldn't take us long."

Among the most skeptical experts was Dr. Max Essex of Harvard School of Public Health.

"I'm not at all convinced Dr. Gupta's find is a new virus," he said. "I'd place the odds at 5 per cent."

COLUMN 10

'I'm the victim' says actress in British scandal

LONDON (R) — A Spanish-born actress whose alleged relationship with a British cabinet minister prompted calls for his resignation was quoted as saying she was the real victim of the affair. In her first interview since the scandal broke, Antonia de Sancha said tabloid press coverage of her relationship with National Heritage Minister David Mellor had made her look like "a tart strutting her stuff." Ms De Sancha's outburst in The Independent newspaper followed statements from senior government officials that Mr. Mellor, 43, had the full backing of Prime Minister John Major and there was no question of his resignation. Ms De Sancha, 31, said to be close to tears, was quoted as saying: "I fell I am the victim. I shouldn't have to. But I have kept my self-respect and I will rebuild my life. "I am being made to look like a tart strutting her stuff for all to see. It is grotesque." She defended her appearance in a film called the Pieman in which a tabloid newspaper said she played the part of a "one-legged hooker who is bedded by a pizza delivery man." The sun newspaper had published pictures of her in what it called "steamy sex scenes." "I was not a porn film, it was a perfectly clean normal film, nothing wrong and my clothes remained on," Ms De Sancha said. "Many classical actresses have played bed scenes, look at Glenda Jackson. It's part of life. As long as it's all in good taste I see nothing wrong with it."

To win this lottery, it helps to be Irish

WASHINGTON (AP) — So you're a foreigner and you want to pursue the American dream but don't have a visa. Don't despair. Your lucky day may be at hand, particularly if you're Irish. For the second consecutive year, the State Department is organising a "visa lottery" that will give natives from 36 countries or territories — mostly in Europe — a shot at residing permanently in the United States. As before, there will be 40,000 winners, of whom 16,000 are earmarked for Irish nationals. Applicants need only type or print their name, date and place of birth and mailing address on a plain sheet of paper and send it to an address in a Virginia suburb of Washington. The application period runs from July 29 to Aug. 28. The pro-Irish tilt to the lottery is attributable to the powerful Irish-American caucus on Capitol Hill that is eager to help out the large numbers of Irish who have overstayed their visas because of the scarcity of jobs back home. Among the Irish who applied last year, 80 per cent were living illegally in the United States. Fear of deportation was a constant concern for many. Irish-American lawmakers felt it was only fair to help out the Irish to compensate for the impact of changes in immigration law in recent years, which have benefited Hispanics and other non-Europeans for the most part.

French want Marie Curie buried with great men

PARIS (R) — More than two-thirds of French people want scientist Marie Curie to be first woman honoured by burial in the last resting place for France's illustrious men, an opinion poll said. The poll, in the Catholic weekly Pelerin Magazine, showed 67 per cent want the Polish-born Curie, who in 1898 isolated radium and discovered radioactivity, buried in the Pantheon National Memorial, alongside national heroes such as the writers Voltaire, Emile Zola and Victor Hugo. Marie Curie, who won two Nobel Prizes, died in 1934 and countless streets are named after her throughout France. The poll was conducted after a group of prominent women, including European Parliamentarian Simone Veil, appealed to President Francois Mitterrand to allow famous members of their sex a burial in the giant former church in Paris' Latin Quarter, which became a secular monument after the French Revolution. Women are not officially barred from the monument but the only woman buried there now is the wife of scientist Marcellin Bethelot, buried together with her husband in a state funeral solely because she died a few hours apart from him. Joan of Arc, who helped drive the English out of France, came a distant second in the poll. Only 22 per cent of those questioned said she deserved burial in the Pantheon.

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